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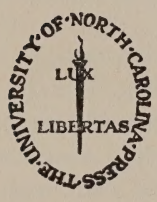
WELFARE WORK IN MILL VILLAGES

The Story of Extra-Mill Activities in North Carolina

BY

HARRIET L. HERRING

Research Associate, Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina



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PREFACE

THIS study of the development of welfare work in the mill villages of North Carolina is one of a considerable number of regional social studies being made and planned by the University of North Carolina Institute for Research in Social Science. More specifically, it is one of the first units in the special group of regional studies of the textile South. It is hoped that this story of industrial welfare work in North Carolina mill communities will be of interest not only to all those who are working in this local field—employer, employee, and community—but to students of American progress everywhere. It may meet also the increased interest on the part of representatives of social work in general and of public welfare in particular, and the very wholesome interest on the part of the public as well.

The present study is an approach and an introduction to the study of the textile industry. For those who wish to carry this particular subject further, the remaining states of the South may well be studied inductively and compared with North Carolina. For all practical purposes, however, this study may be taken as an index of the situation as it has developed, is developing now, and may develop in the future. This volume is the result of personal first-hand investigation by the author of 322 mills out of the approximate 500 in the State. These mills were very carefully selected out of a wide range of age, size, location, policy, and local reputation, so that the material is adequately representative and provides a uniformity of method and a kaleidoscopic wealth of detail in the form of impressions and observations. It has the merit, therefore, of approximating case studies showing great individuality, concreteness of pictures, and a wide range of differences. A major value of the book is in its variety of concrete illustration of individual characteristics. Although it is not possible to emphasize a summary of the findings and con-

clusions without detracting from the intrinsic value of the study, the busy reader may find generalizations in Chapters II and XVIII. For the convenience of those who may not be familiar with the development of this sort of social work and the theory which underlies it, I have included a brief story of industrial welfare work in general and in the textile industry in particular in Chapters XVI and XVII.

It has, of course, been necessary to limit the subject not only geographically but topically. For example, a study of the public policy of the mills as represented by the organized groups would involve a different sort of approach and a different type of research from that which was necessary for the present story of the practices and development of the individual mill in its own village and the local social reactions. This study will be supplemented immediately by a general story of the economic development of the textile industry in the South.

I am indebted to many individuals for cordial and effective coöperation in the making of this study. It is scarcely possible or desirable to list all who have given indispensable information, practical assistance, stimulating suggestions, lively criticism, and occasional mild or vigorous opposition. To the mill executives who so generously gave me of their time and records, who related their experiences fully and stated their opinions frankly, I am particularly indebted. To many workers in the field—welfare, health, recreation—as well as to school officials, and to citizens in general I am also much indebted.

For reading of the whole or parts of the manuscript and for helpful suggestions, I wish to thank a number of mill executives as well as Professor Broadus Mitchell, of the Johns Hopkins University, Miss Mary Van Kleeck, of the Russell Sage Foundation, and Dr. Louis Round Wilson, of the University of North Carolina Press. To the memory of the late Mr. George B. Logan, of the University of North Carolina Library, I am grateful for the smoothing of many a crude sentence. I wish to thank, also, my colleague, Miss Katharine Jocher, and her staff, of the Institute for Research in Social Science, for prompt, patient, and careful assistance in the preparation of the material.

Finally, this study, like many others of North Carolina and the South, finished and in progress, owes much to the initiative

of Dr. Howard W. Odum. His high courage in dealing with a difficult subject and his confidence in me have made the field work possible. His continued inspiration has made the tedious recording of the results an adventure.

HARRIET L. HERRING

CHAPEL HILL, N. C.
August, 1928

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CHAPTER I

THE STUDY OF WELFARE WORK AS A FIRST UNIT IN THE STUDY OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

THE COTTON MILLS A "NATURAL PRODUCT"

BEFORE HE has been working a week the greenest hand in the cotton mill can tell you that "on some days the work runs good, and on others it runs bad." As his experience increases he can distinguish between reasons, at least for the bad running: the day is too cold or too hot, too dry or too humid, too windy, or there is too much electricity in the air. Sometimes he may recognize that his own feelings have much to do with it. On certain days he feels on tip-toe and keeps ahead of his job while on others he does not see the flaws till the warning waste begins to pile up. And then, again, it may be his material: the cotton may be dirty or rotten or unevenly mixed, or the staple too long or too short for the adjustment of his machine.

As a novice in a mill the writer, with the aid of experienced fellow-workers, once tried to allocate one and another of the reasons for the character of successive days' runs. But there were still, and frequently, days of unaccountable good or bad running. Appeal to a veteran foreman brought a reply which, in its penetration and its philosophy, may well be the keynote of this, or any, study of the textile industry. What the foreman said was, in effect: We must remember that we are working with a *natural* product, not a machine-made one. Cotton *grows*, and into its fibers are bred the variations arising in seed and soil, in sun and rain, in culture and exposure, which no amount of grading can classify and no machine can remedy. We try to "average out" the extremes by thorough mixing and by mechanical controls, but it is still a natural material and, as such, is full of variations.

The cotton mill, especially in the South, is almost as variable as the material with which it deals. The system here illustrates

excellently the relation between industrial evolution and community development. The character of the individual mill is often set by the character of the man or men who fathered it. Its community development, while not always dependent on the manager as is generally supposed, is shaped largely by the social-mindedness of the husbandmen who guide it through exposure to the wind and weather of good times and dull. And, not to press the simile too hard, perhaps the soil out of which the social and community life of the mill village grows into fullness or shrivels into mal-fruition is formed out of the character and ideals of the workers who make up the community and those of other communities which react upon it.

Therefore in dealing with this natural product, this concatenation of events and forces and personalities, we must expect variability. Unfortunately, to classify and generalize without facts seem to be as human as to err; certainly generalized comment on cotton mills and cotton mill people has often been synonymous with error. In the hundred and fifty years of the existence of cotton mills in England and America, men have seen a particular good or a particular ill in the mills about them and have praised or damned all mills in round terms, until the tradition of attack and defense has become all but stereotyped. "They are just as good as anybody" stands against "cotton mill class" spoken with a superior or condescending air; "they have better morals, more Christianity and brotherly love," against "the degraded, immoral mill village"; "the wholesome, directed community life," versus "the deadening monotony varied only by more deadening control." But in this long history of attack and defense the friends who selected the good and the critics who saw the ill have talked to, and been heard by, only their own groups. The twain never have met; the protagonists never have joined issue to get the matter argued out. For every discussion is made up of one set of arguments and facts—either *pro* or *con*—and none of the other enters. When occasionally the feeling prompting these heated arguments and biased statements of fact has cooled a bit we find writers and speakers beginning to see a little of both sides. But presto, up bobs an agitation for a labor law, and in the tumult and the shouting even more violent statements are made by the two parties. Then each discounts all that the other says

and the general public often comes to discount most of what both groups say.

To him who has eyes to see, the cotton mill villages of the South and of North Carolina are not more closely alike—nor less closely so—than the small country towns they hover near. To him who has a heart to understand, life in the "four room cottages" is not more monotonous or colorless or more lacking in drama—that it could hardly be!—than in the dull, unpainted little farm tenant houses, on the one hand, or in the homes of village Main Streets, on the other. The mills and the mill villages are a piece out of life and as such are as varied as life, both between mill and mill and within the same mill community.

NEED FOR HISTORICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY

It is, then, not sufficient to look upon the village and the system as the "mill baron" might, and call it good; or as a "social reformer" might, and pronounce anathemas upon it. We have done that long enough. If there are any economic, social, political, or community problems in the mill village system in North Carolina and the South—and it is to be suspected that there are—they will hardly be solved by propaganda or denunciation. If these were efficacious the system would long ago have been perfect. Recent developments in the new social studies—the tendency to analyze social phenomena, to inquire into the historical reasons for their being, to try to isolate the germ of disease or to cherish the embryo of health—should proffer help more scientific than has heretofore been applied to these perennially challenging problems.

So far little of this careful study has been made of the problems of the Southern mill villages by the social scientists. So far this attitude of mind is to be found, if at all, in the daily work of an occasional leader in the industry itself. If the social scientists can conceive of their job as one of research, then they may be of service to these pioneer spirits in the industry who are already seriously attacking their local village problems and who need information which they now have no time to collect for themselves. If the social workers can cultivate impartiality on this subject and can substitute the devoted search after truth for the uninformed "righteous-

ness" of the past, they may be instrumental in leading other executives into the ranks of those social-minded and far-seeing men in the mills who are seeking more than a day-to-day adjustment. For it is upon its own ground that the problem of each mill village must be worked out. There is no one device that will serve in all places. There is scarcely an evil that is not a good, or at least is not considered one, under some conditions, and hardly a good that has not somewhere run amuck. A century and a half of attack on the mills and of attempts to reform them has discovered no panacea. It would seem more appropriate at least to try the less spectacular method of analyzing the situation, finding out what it is and how it came to be what it is and attempting to profit by the experience of the past.

It is the desire for such an approach that has prompted this study of the history of welfare, or extra-mill activities, in the mills of North Carolina. The topic thus laid out has been purposely limited in order that the discussion may be as detailed as the material warrants. It is frankly introductory to larger topics which will require research more complicated: labor turnover, family mobility, and occupational mobility; cost of living and equivalents of compensation; social, educational, and religious efforts and ideals; and economic backgrounds.

Perhaps this study may indeed be regarded as only introductory to the subject of welfare work itself. To be sure it does answer the question as to the extent and nature of welfare work in North Carolina mills. It answers, less satisfactorily, the question as to what extent welfare work is a financial burden upon the manufacturers, and whether it is motivated by enlightened self interest or by humanitarian impulse or by necessity. It answers only slightly, or not at all, questions relating to broad public policy: independence of the workers, or arbitrary, if often benevolent, employer control; the training of the people to a higher plane of living, or the development of a stereotyped mill village life. These and many other questions wait for answer upon such researches as are suggested above, before we can see the problems in all their interrelations, before we can justly say that welfare work merits either the praise or the blame that it has received.

INTEREST IN COTTON MILLS AND THEIR WELFARE WORK

It is to be assumed that exact knowledge of these and many other topics would be of value to the men and women who deal directly with problems of management and community work. Certainly it would be of interest to students of social conditions, of economics, and of industrial relations. And if articles, letters to the press, speeches, and books are an index, the general public has maintained an unflagging interest in cotton mills and a lively curiosity about mill life and work.

In North Carolina and in the South generally this interest is easy to explain. The industry has had a revolutionary effect on economic life, has in many localities greatly modified the educational system and religious institutions, and, many think, is in process of evolving a different social and community structure. Most of these modifications have been outgrowths of the extra-mill activities such as the company housing, village, store, school, relief, community program, the social work. By the urbanization of a rural people—if gathering into small villages can be called urbanization—by the breaking down of isolation, by a paternalistic interest in personal, family, and social affairs, the cotton mill village system of the South is profoundly modifying life for a large section of her people. No history of the section for the last quarter of a century or more can be complete without attention to the social effects of the mills. The story of their welfare work may therefore serve not only as an introduction to more esoteric economic and social studies, but it is of value as an end in itself. It is a part of the history of a people.

COTTON MILLS A PIONEER INDUSTRY

This wide interest in the cotton mills and what they are doing to the people who work inside them and live in their shadow is by no means limited to the South and our own day. The persistence and liveliness of the interest is curious and unique, but it is partially explained by the fact that the textile industry has always been a pioneer industry. In England, New England, the South, and now in the Orient it has been the advance guard of the industrial revolution. Conse-

quently it has been blamed for offenses that other, later industries committed as a matter of course. It caused sharp breaks with custom—a tradition of household industry in England, of pioneer, farmer, and sailor activities in New England, and of super-rural life in the South. It set up a new discipline; it substituted direct for indirect economic interdependence; it put women to work outside the home; it worked children; even more disconcerting, it brought women and children into direct competition with men. And because it did these things before any other industry, it caught and held attention as no other industry has done.

Because the mills first disturbed the *mores* of a community or a section and changed its economic bearings, they received perhaps a double portion of blame and denunciation. Also, the fact that they and the society about them have not satisfactorily solved the problems they have raised has kept them in the limelight of criticism. And they share liberally in the larger unrest and criticism of other industries, the country over. Because they brought work for idle and poverty-stricken hands, prosperity to towns and their citizens, and a local and national pride in a newly unfurled flag of commerce, they have always raised up for themselves defenders and apologists to equal the number of critics.

TRADITIONS VERSUS MODERN METHODS

And yet the textile industry, though it has been a pioneer in so many localities, is withal very old as industries go. In its time it has built up many traditions regarding machinery and men. The rumor in 1923 or 1924 that Henry Ford was going to enter it and realign its processes caused more than a small flurry of excitement. Modern functional management has made little headway against the traditional line organization, with its well-defined channels of authority. Personnel administration has for the most part left the cotton mills cold; and their substitute, welfare work, is still largely on the same basis of personal, paternalistic interest that it was under Robert Owen at New Lanark, Scotland, under Nathan Appleton at Lowell, Massachusetts, under William Gregg at Graniteville, South Carolina, and under Daniel Pratt at Prattville, Alabama. Mill

executives complain of the expensive Old-Man-of-the-Sea that housing has become, but "all mills provide houses and we always have. We have to do it." Few of them have ever given half the serious thought to *solving*, instead of perpetuating, this problem that they have given to the selection of the best type of bobbin box.

It may be, however, that we are at the beginning of a new era in this tradition-bound industry. There are several straws that seem to indicate a fresh wind blowing. The textile magazines have, during all these later years of depression, asked repeatedly what is the matter with the textile industry. They have usually answered their question by some sort of plea for more expert and scientific knowledge—better chemistry and engineering for the manufacturing, marketing based on expert knowledge of supply and demand. In this field the new Cotton-Textile Institute may yet prove the practical and commercial value of research.

So far these little beginnings of a scientific movement are touching human, social, and community phases of mill problems almost not at all. But if the value of research is proved in other branches of the industry, it will take only a boom period with consequent shortage of labor to find the principles applied to these fields as well. When this time comes the experiments by individual mills—as yet timid and lukewarm experiments in the study of labor turnover, democratic participation in village activities, home ownership schemes and the like, will come into prominence as pioneer activities, teaching either by their success or their horrible example.

Interest in statistical studies carried on by federal and state agencies and by free lance investigators shows that there is more than a beginning of public demand for facts relating to the industry. The number of these studies increases yearly, and newspapers copy large sections of their surveys. It was therefore only natural that the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina should have included among its eight or nine major fields for research a group of studies of the textile industry. It was also only natural perhaps that individual mills should have coöperated in giving the information desired. For notwithstanding the fact that the industry has been investigated and exposed to

unfair and unwarranted enmity, as well as to quite as undeserved and extravagant praise, since 1770, it has always retained to a remarkable degree the habit of welcoming visitors. Even though its growing organizations oppose study and investigation, this habit is one more proof of the highly individualistic nature of the industry, in that mill men do not follow closely the policies favored by the organized group. Travelers in England tell us that visiting the mills is not now so simple, and experience in New England will quickly demonstrate the need for some sort of introduction. But once in, the visitor is almost as free to look and question as he ever was there and as he still is in the South. The South is still a happy hunting ground for the investigator. To the many visitors who come his way the Southern mill executive gives generously of his time and places no restrictions upon questions and upon looking about the plant and village provided they are careful to keep away from certain financial matters which the executive considers trade secrets.

At least he will answer to the best of his ability. The truth of the matter is that he does not know the answers to many of the questions that would be asked by the average student interested in community organization and social values. He knows that the people of his village seem contented and do not move about a great deal or that they "are always on the go," but he cannot tell you what his labor turnover is. He knows that he does or does not try to supply community leadership, but just what the leader does, or how the program is received, or how many participate, or what are its results, is rather beyond the range of his concrete knowledge. And if the mill executive does not know such facts concerning the small organization with which he works every day and in which he knows almost every individual personally, if he must generalize to the student on the situation, it is not strange that most of the writing and talking about mills has been in the nature of insufficiently supported generalization.

To this we must add the American habit of disregarding changes that are not ushered in with a fanfare of trumpets—with a revolution or a constitutional amendment or at least a change in party or a new law. We tend to forget that quite as momentous changes—and if they be social and economic,

probably greater ones—can take place through a gradual process of growth and development. A people accustomed to date most of its great changes from wars finds it hard to realize that manufacturers and business men can bring about genuine revolutions. It is doubly hard to realize that such men work revolution neither as reformers nor as reactionaries, but simply as normal forces in the process of carrying on their business. We have a vague consciousness that something is going on and consequently an interest in discovering what cotton manufacture is doing to the people who practise it as a factory art. But that our ideas are vague is shown by the popular interest in the restatement, year after year, decade after decade, of the same *pro* and *con* generalizations based upon opinion which, in turn, has only the very slightest acquaintance with the facts.

It is, then, out of such an atmosphere of generalization, of vague wonder at the significance of the industrial revolution going on in the South, as yet untouched by the new spirit of scientific research into human affairs, that this introductory study has grown. If it shows many of the earmarks of the old type of generalized study, that is partly because of the nature of the subject. If it is full of quoted opinions, that is because many of them have had a powerful influence on the development of welfare work. Indeed, the opinions of many of the leaders have determined the nature of welfare work in all mills, and because these men have had a part in the making of this history their opinions have reacted on the course of events here recorded.

WHAT IS WELFARE WORK IN NORTH CAROLINA?

The name welfare work is given to this study because usage almost dictates this choice. The term has come to include most of those extra-mill activities whose rise and development are traced here. But this general use of the term does not preclude its having different meanings to different persons. It may be well in the beginning to avoid any possible confusion. First of all, welfare work has one very fundamental distinction from "social work." The latter implies no relation between employer and employee, but rather suggests the activities of a state de-

partment or a volunteer organization. Welfare work is always the work of an employer. Social work means to most people advice in the solution of individual or family problems through any possible adjustment. Welfare work attacks its problems in terms of the mill village and the mill trades. Most social work deals with separate families; welfare work does this only in part, for it consists largely of group and community adjustment and activities. Some mill welfare workers call themselves, and are called, social workers; such in a sense they are, but social workers with a difference.

And when we restrict the term to employers' work, to textile mills, and even to North Carolina, there are several different senses in which it is used. In its general sense it means all or any activities of a company for the comfort and well-being, social, moral, intellectual, or physical, of its employees, carried on by the efforts of the owner and manager personally, or by volunteer or specially employed workers. They are activities which do not have to do directly with production. Thus limited, the term includes everything with which this study has attempted to deal.

In a narrower sense welfare work is used to refer to outside activities carried on by any sort of worker employed for that purpose, such as a doctor, nurse, recreation leader, or domestic science teacher. In this sense it includes those restricted activities which, as this study shows, usually start in some form of volunteer or personal work and develop into one of the specialized functions discussed in the various chapters to follow.

The term is also used in a still narrower sense perhaps more frequently than in the others. Here it is synonymous with the work of a general community worker, who may carry on a multitude of tasks, and does not include any personal or volunteer activities, or even those of specialized workers. In interviews mill executives would sometimes say that they had no welfare work, when more detailed questioning brought out the fact that much volunteer and casual work was done. There were even cases of this response when a doctor or a nurse or a kindergarten teacher was employed. At the other extreme was one man who said that the first welfare work his company did was in the eighties, in supplying teams to move families

from their poor little farms into the mill village where they had their first chance at decent living conditions and sure wages. He considered that for some time the money loaned or given for moving expenses promoted welfare work as much as any the company spends today. Some managers mentioned baseball teams and such activities at once; others did so only when specifically asked about them, and then dismissed the subject—"Oh yes, of course we aid them." Some referred immediately to their water and sewerage systems; others protested that they did no welfare work—"don't believe in it"—but when the topic of housing came up they told of their really excellent housing conditions, which add quite as much to the cost and the comfort of their villages as an elaborate welfare scheme.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

This study is frankly descriptive. The nature of the material makes this method necessary. Great variety in the type of welfare activities, the interplay of personal and other rather unaccountable influences running through several decades, all make it impossible to treat many phases of the subject statistically. An introductory study of this kind suffers from lack of accumulated facts on the cotton mill and its village, so that as yet the subject can be dealt with analytically only in spots.

Moreover, the manner of collecting the data makes the descriptive method necessary. The information could not be gathered by the use of questionnaires. A questionnaire that would secure such information on all sorts of welfare work could not have been devised. No one could have foreseen the multiform activities that were uncovered. A questionnaire that would suit the mill which was very active in welfare work would completely discourage the mill with a less pretentious program. A questionnaire suited to an old mill with generations of history would manifestly not fit the situation of a mill built since the World War. Large, small; rural, suburban, town; cotton, hosiery—all these variations add infinitely to the differences in welfare work. And if a questionnaire could have been made it could not have been filled out. The mill executive knows with exactness only a very few of the things

that would have been asked. Since he could not fill in a space with a categorical answer his impulse would have been to leave it blank. And finally, questionnaires, especially if they are long, have become extremely unpopular.

Of course the interview—which was the method used—has its many limitations. The generosity of the mill executive in giving his time was amazing; but even the most courteously received visitor could hardly presume upon the time of a busy man long enough to learn all the facts of his mill and village history, present activities in all their ramifications, and the executive's attitudes and opinions about the whole system. An effort was made to cover the most important things, at least, that an individual mill was doing. If in some cases whole subjects were omitted, that was inevitable in view of the circumstances of the interview, or more commonly because of the great wealth of material. Information furnished by executives was sometimes sketchy and based on guesswork, but it was usually cheerfully given and when possible was carefully checked. Their opinions had grown out of this same somewhat impressionistic knowledge, but they were frankly and openly stated. And after all, when we remember that the mill man is close to his job and usually has been so for many years, this experience forms an adequate basis for judgments that are not just hit-or-miss guesses.

In the main, the material for this study necessarily came from the executives of the mills. It was reinforced, most frequently at their own suggestion, and checked and added to by information from school, health, and welfare agents of town and county.

CHAPTER II

SETTING AND SCOPE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

WELFARE WORK in the textile industry of North Carolina is a growth from the economic and social roots of the industry itself. Because this is true it may be well to summarize these fundamental factors as revealed by a rapid review of the settlement of the state and the activities and attitudes of its people. This sketch of the background will be followed by an equally rapid account of the rise of the mills and the development of those extra-mill activities which succeeding chapters discuss in more detail.

THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND THEIR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

From about the year 1650 pioneers from the Virginia settlements began to straggle into the eastern river bottoms of the wilderness that was to become North Carolina. Other Englishmen came via the Barbados or direct from the mother country. But other nationalities came too—German Palatines, Swiss, French Huguenots, a few New Englanders, and, after the battle of Culloden in 1746, Scotch Highlanders. To these varied strains, pressing inland from the coast, were added quite as varied groups from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and even from the back counties of Virginia. The Scotch-Irish (Scotch Lowlanders from the north of Ireland), Germans, Quakers, mixed or pure national groups, made their way down the great natural highway of the Appalachian valleys. Others came to Charleston and penetrated up the rivers from South Carolina.[1] North Carolina was from 1650 until the eighteen-thirties, when

[1]Holland Thompson, *From the Cotton Field to the Cotton Mill* (New York: Macmillan, 1906), pp. 16–22. Except where otherwise noted, I am indebted to Mr. Thompson for the historical background outlined in this chapter.

emigration set in, a veritable melting pot. The new strains came in so gradually that they were well mixed in all sections, there being few counties which did not furnish a home to several nationalities.

To be sure, there were more English and Virginians in the east, and this section savored more of England in its social, political, and domestic life, and more of Virginia in its economic system. The Piedmont had smaller holdings, more intensive culture, and more varied pursuits. But these variations were as much the result of differences in the fertility and contour of the land as in the settlers. For even in the east the holdings were never very large. The original grants of land by the Lords Proprietors in North Carolina to the individual settlers were small, seldom over 640 acres. Thus North Carolina did not have the great plantations which early characterized her neighbors. Partly because of the policy of small grants, partly because of the nature of the immigrants, it was in the main a state populated by workers, not by "country gentlemen," great rice or tobacco planters, or land speculators. Contrary to current popular idealization there were many artisans, blacksmiths, tanners, cabinetmakers, potters, shoemakers, weavers, and fullers.

There was, therefore, much manufacturing in small establishments serving single neighborhoods. The textile industry was entirely in the domestic stage. In 1810 Tenche Coxe gave the value of textile products of North Carolina as $2,989,140, and of Massachusetts, $2,219,279, the latter figure including the output of her little factories. In the same year the state ranked fourth in the Union in the number of hides tanned and second to New Jersey in "bloomeries," producing bar iron for the blacksmiths. In value of all manufacturing the state ranked seventh.

In such a state it was natural that cotton mills should be built. It was also natural, given the general economic situation and transportation system, that they should be small establishments serving small territories. The first mill of which definite record exists, built near Lincolnton in 1813, was followed by others widely scattered over the state. Where did they get operatives?

The white population was 629,942 in 1860, representing

probably 125,000 families, and included 34,658 slaveholders. Of the 75,203 separate farms reported, 69.1 per cent were under a hundred acres; 20,882 of them, or about 40 per cent of the total, consisted of only twenty to fifty acres. The owners of large plantations and many slaves were somewhat concentrated in the eastern part of the state, so that in the central section an even greater proportion of the families had no slaves and very small farms. Other work than farming for at least one or two members of the family was not unwelcome. It is not surprising, then, that students of the early mills have found evidences of a labor supply similar to that in the early New England mills: daughters of neighboring farmers working for a few years before marriage. But the spasmodic operation of the mills must have made them dependent for at least a part of their workers upon a surplus labor supply which could have been furnished only by families some of whose members could work at another trade or occupation for a part of the year. This requirement was filled in the small farmer and the tenant farmer. There is mention of only one mill of any size, that at Rocky Mount founded in 1818, which was manned by slaves.

But even from the beginning the custom of building small log or frame houses for employees was common. Almost every old mill visited in the course of making this study still has one or more of its first houses—sometimes rebuilt or enlarged, sometimes of logs weatherboarded and ceiled, and in a few cases in very nearly the original condition. These early mills probably did not house all of their small working force. In the first place each mill had too few houses, seldom more than a dozen. In the second place the mills operated too irregularly. They stopped when the streams upon which they depended for power became too high or too low. Having no connection with commercial distributors they stopped likewise when the neighborhood demand was supplied. Hence many of their workers were operatives only incidentally.

Indeed, the whole state turned to manufacturing only incidentally. For the chain of developments that started with the invention of the cotton gin and the rapid increase in the textile industry of England and New England caused a demand which made cotton king in North Carolina almost as irresistibly as

in the other Southern states. Cotton raising pressed into the uplands, where the young industry was springing up. In the eighteen-thirties the two were in head-on collision. For a time it looked as if manufacturing might win. In 1838 the *Western Carolinian,* published in Salisbury, made a survey of the mill situation in the state. It listed eleven mills in operation, seven being built, several projected, and for good measure added that "besides these it is very probable that there may be one or two others in the state." The editor pointed out the advantages of abundant and cheap water supply, nearness to raw material, and labor cheaper than in New England. "We may venture the opinion that in two years, North Carolina will not only supply the demand for her own consumption with the coarser cotton fabrics, but also send them out for sale into the markets of the world. On the whole, the manufacturers of the northern states need not much longer count North Carolina as one of their markets; they may rather regard her as a competitor, and one, who, from the great advantage she possesses, will soon become very formidable."[2]

But it took over a half century for this prophecy to be fulfilled, for cotton raising won out. In 1840 there were twenty-five establishments, but as they had only 47,934 spindles, 700 looms, and 1,219 operatives it is easy to see that they were small. In 1860 thirty-nine mills with 41,884 spindles, 761 looms, and 1,755 workers were reported.[3] North Carolina was growing yearly more dependent on New England and England for textiles and other industrial products, not so much from the decay of her own industries as from their failure to expand.

During the Civil War the little mills did all they could to supply the great demand occasioned by the cutting off of outside sources of supply. But they themselves were cut off from material for the repair and replacement of machinery. By the end of the war those which had escaped burning at the hands of the federal troops were in poor condition. There was no capital for renewing the machinery on an up-to-date basis;

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[2]Reprinted by the *Farmers' Register,* Richmond, Va., Aug. 1, 1838. Reprinted by the *Raleigh News and Observer,* Oct. 5, 1924.

[3]U. S. Census Reports, *Special Reports on Selected Industries* (12th Census; Washington: U. S. Census Office, 1902), vol. IX, part 3.

there was certainly none for building new mills. The high price of cotton made its culture seem the one means of economic salvation. Plantations and farms that had formerly produced their supplies of grains and meats now concentrated on cotton. In 1870 we find only thirty-three mills enumerated, with 39,897 spindles and 1,453 operatives.[4] The textile industry was about where it was in 1840.

During the decade 1870–80 some progress was made. To be sure, the census of 1880 enumerates only forty-nine establishments with 92,385 spindles, 3,343 operatives, and a cotton consumption of 27,642 bales. But the foundations were being laid for more rapid progress later. The price of cotton declined from 23.98 cents in 1870 to 10.38 cents in 1879, and the best cotton farmers began to invest the money they had made under higher prices in cotton manufacturing instead of in more and more cotton land. Mills began to use commission houses and agents in distributing their goods. "Much gratuitous advice was now offered to the section. It was gravely announced by those interested in preventing manufacturing development that the Southern climate was not suitable for spinning on account of the dryness; that machinery could not be kept in good condition on account of the moisture; that labor could not be found at all; that the native labor could never attain satisfactory skill; that it would be an economic waste to draw labor from the production of cotton into its manufacture. It was prophesied that the necessary managing ability could not be found, and capital was warned not to trust itself in the hazardous enterprise. Extreme solicitude for the savages of the South was also manifested." [4a]

Many students of the industry, including V. S. Clark, M. T. Copeland, and, more recently, Broadus Mitchell, definitely place the revival of the Southern textile industry at 1880. It is as good a date for North Carolina as for the entire South. Small commercial and industrial ventures failed often for lack of capital or experience, but more often they succeeded, and their success encouraged entrepreneurs. The machinery houses of the North saw in the new mills an outlet for their products.

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[4]U. S. Census, *op. cit.*

[4a] Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–63.

They sold machinery on favorable terms; they sent agents to encourage the building of mills; they even took a part of the price of the machinery in shares of stock.

But the chief reason for the development was a change in spirit. Reconstruction was over. Leaders now had time for something besides politics and its attendant social problems. The South and North Carolina were beginning to look toward the future with hope, instead of backward to the old past with regret and to the more recent past with bitterness. Broadus Mitchell, in preparing his valuable study of cotton mills,[5] examined all sorts of contemporary evidence and interviewed scores of men who had had a part in the new movement. He concludes that the building of mills was a conscious development. More than that, it was a patriotic, almost a religious, campaign. Appeals for subscription to stock were made on grounds rather different from the usual arguments employed for such sales. It was often pointed out that a mill would provide work for idle people sadly needing employment, especially widows and orphans who had no means of making a living. Even more often the mill became a rallying point for community pride, and every town felt it must have a mill. Merchants wanted a mill pay-roll in the town; indeed, not a few merchants built or led in the building of local mills. These early situations brought about an important result. They meant that the local public had two strong reasons for interest in the mills—a money investment and a community hope. In general the mills have fulfilled the expectations in both respects.

The evidences of this new awakening were shown in the census returns in 1890. There were then 91 establishments, 337,786 spindles, and 8,515 operatives. Cotton consumption was 114,371 bales, or nearly one-third the production of the state.[6] Since this same condition was true of other states, the Northern manufacturers stopped saying that the South could not manufacture cotton. Instead they began to establish new mills and branches in the South. Most of these, however, went

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[5]*The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1921), chap. II, *passim.*

[6]U. S. Census, *op. cit.*

to South Carolina and Georgia, in order to be nearer the center of the cotton belt, for proximity to the raw material was then the chief argument for manufacturing in the South. In North Carolina very few mills were built with Northern capital.[7]

This dependence upon state and local, nay, even neighborhood, capital has largely continued in North Carolina. It has had two results. In the first place, it has meant that the mills are small. North Carolina has always had about twice as many establishments as South Carolina, though in number of spindles the two states have remained fairly close together. From 1860 to 1890 Georgia forged far ahead in spindles but had fewer plants. In 1900 North Carolina had the same number of plants as Massachusetts, that is, 177. But Massachusetts had probably already reached the peak in number, and her expansion since then has taken the form of larger plants, whereas North Carolina has only begun to feel that movement toward concentration which is so general in American industry.[8] So strong is the tradition for small units that even in the recent period of mill building since 1917 profits from an old mill were used to build, not an addition, but a new plant, often in another part of the town or in a different town. There has been some consolidation of ownership, so that there are now a number of groups or chains of mills under the same general management. But this practice seems to affect financial policies, the nature of the product, and such more or less technical matters more than it affects human relations. At any rate, one frequently sees considerable differences in the physical appearance of the mills and the villages belonging to plants of the same chain, even in the same vicinity. One frequently observes a considerable difference in the esteem in which two plants of the same group are held by the general public and by mill operatives. This is largely due to the fact that each plant manager can set the tone of his establishment. Thus, even with the present tendency toward loose consolidation, North Carolina mills still are what they always have been: small units in which the head of the concern can know his workers personally.

In the second place, dependence on local capital has meant

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[7]Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 67, verified by Broadus Mitchell.

[8]U. S. Census, 1900 and 1920.

that these small mills were projected and built by leaders in their communities. It got to the point that if a man was not head of the local cotton mill, he could make little pretense of being the head of his community.[9] As leading man he was before the public, just as his plant was, because of local investment and because it was the biggest thing in town. His position made him sensitive to local public opinion in a way that individual managers have seldom been. Small mills meant also a local labor supply, at least until the industry expanded. Then the new plants, especially in the upper Piedmont, began to send scouts to the mountain counties whence they would bring down families who had been neighbors, thus giving some basis for community continuity. Before 1890 the state manufactured only coarse yarns. These were easier to make with the raw help fresh from the farms and the mountains; they were also easier for the equally raw managements, lacking as they did any technical training. But both groups learned, and the decade from 1890 to 1900 shows a large increase in production of the more profitable finer yarns. This movement went on even more rapidly in the early years of the next decade and indeed has gone on to a considerable extent ever since. With the depression following the panic of 1907 came the conviction that the mills must weave more of their yarns, in order to be less dependent on the fluctuations of the market. The number of looms increased from 25,469 in 1900 to 70,874 in 1919.[10]

The latest improvements made in the industry in North Carolina, like the swing to weaving, grew out of depression. Since 1920 the cry has been for diversification of product and for finishing of goods—bleaching, dyeing, printing, mercerizing, etc. A list showing recent new departures in plants already existing and the new products of new plants was compiled by the *Southern Textile Bulletin* in 1926. Some of the innovations are: rayon mixtures, printed goods, tape, towels, belting, coutil and jacquard specialties, silk goods, broad silk, labels, elastic webbing novelties, bedspreads, tire cord, plushes and velours, cotton blankets, rugs, and draperies. Six new dye plants and processing companies and several bleach-

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[9]Mitchell, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

[10]Census 1920, vol. X, pp. 179 ff.

eries and print works have been added to those already existing.[11]

THE PEOPLE IN THE MILLS

The early mills were built on the streams to utilize the small water power advantages. They were largely manned by the people in the vicinity. In the beginning of the "cotton mill campaign" of the eighties the same use of local help continued. As Broadus Mitchell has so well shown, the presence of idle or poorly employed people in the town served in two ways to affect mill building. Sometimes the mill was started, ostensibly at least, to give them employment; sometimes the presence of such people, insuring a labor supply, was the chief reason for building a mill in that particular place. The rapid growth of the industry during the nineties would have created a labor shortage had it not been for difficult conditions in agriculture. The low prices of cotton—often around five cents—and the almost equally low prices for tobacco were below the cost of production. The farmers got in debt to the time merchants. They could scarcely secure cash to pay taxes. The mills seemed to suffer little from the depression; with their new connections in the North for selling, they ran night and day. More and more hard-working, solid people, were forced into the mills along with the less provident, who had been pinched first. But by the early nineteen-hundreds and again after the depression of 1907–8, labor for the ever increasing plants began to be scarce. Labor scouts sent to the country around and to the mountains enticed families with rather too glowing pictures. They told of wages amounting to cash far beyond anything these families had ever handled. They paid moving expenses. Sometimes they enticed workers from neighboring mills in the same way.

Mill work has always, in every new seat of the industry, been accompanied by at least some social disesteem. Besides being the first industry to take people, especially women and children, out of the homes to work, it put rural workers, accustomed to a great deal of freedom, under the eyes of half a dozen bosses all day long. It is still common in North Caro-

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[11]Quoted by the *Raleigh News and Observer,* Feb. 14, 1926.

lina to hear men whose economic status would probably be better for direction of their efforts say with pride that they have "never worked a day for any boss man." To this unaccustomed discipline the mill added another even more irksome. It expected a man to be on the job every day. And these things, added to the methods of scouting for labor, applied rather indiscriminately, served to attract many unstable people and to render them more unstable. This highly mobile element has given the cotton mill population a reputation that is none too good and that was not improved in the years of unrest during, and just following, the World War. But the proportion of "poor white trash" in the population of North Carolina has never been so large as writers a generation ago would have led us to believe; and the mills very likely have had no more than their proportionate share of them. The excessive mobility of this class exaggerates their actual number. There is need for comparative studies of family mobility in mill and other communities. The limited investigations of the writer have resulted in an opinion which is corroborated by the few other people who have made any detailed study of the matter, namely, that most of the moving is still done by about one-fourth of the families.

If this is true now, it was undoubtedly true in earlier years when the mill village pattern was being formed. With good roads and automobiles, with mills close together and more visiting among the people, they learned more readily of the advantages that may seem to exist at another mill. All these things cause more moving, and yet the close personal relations between the managers and the bulk of the workers continue. The mills are larger. They averaged less than 2,000 spindles in 1880, about 6,500 in 1900, and 15,000 in 1920.[12] But the chief executive still knows most of the workers by name and many of them very well. The villages are not so isolated, and still they form more or less distinct communities with their own life and tone. The industry has passed through several

[12]This average results from dividing the total spindles by the number of establishments given by the U. S. Census. See page 24 for discussion of a comparison between the number of establishments given by federal and state authorities. If state figures for the number of mills were used the average number of spindles would be even smaller.

severe, and many minor, ups and downs producing unrest and discontent; it has had many flurries of unionism, but even the strikes growing out of these agitations have been singularly free from any aftermath of bitterness. With the increasing age of the industry there have been some signs of the formation of an operating class and an owning, or rather a managing, class; but so far at least this can hardly be said to have created class consciousness. Such a feeling cannot grow fast when there has been so much rising from the ranks as has been possible in the industry—a condition which will soon begin to change, owing to the need for large amounts of capital and more technical training. There is little concern with modern ideas about the inexorableness of the industrial order, and there is much belief in the rewards of ability and ambition. There has been too much similarity in the whole social philosophy of employers and employees for much disagreement between them. For both, the belief that "every tub should stand on its own bottom" is very much tempered by the conviction that the strong and well-to-do should help the weak and poor. Their Jeffersonian belief that one man is as good as another has a corollary in their willingness to follow a real leader even if he is autocratic. If the strong individualistic bent observable throughout North Carolina history prevents the workers from organizing, the same spirit makes each ambitious executive long and work for his own mill, to be built and run according to his own notions.

With so many ideas in common, it is not surprising to find the employers and the employees of the little mills of North Carolina working out many of their problems in a highly personal, individualistic manner. One of the greatest fields for expression of these ideas is in that Southern adjunct to the industry—the mill village. The social implications of the mill village may yet prove as important as the economic consequences of the shift in the industry from New England to the South. For along with the development of this artificial community have gradually arisen activities with a bearing on the social, religious, educational, and physical lives of the people —activities as far-reaching in effect as the new discipline of the machine. The extra-mill activities approach, for some quarter of a million people of North Carolina, the rank and importance of a major social institution.

SCOPE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

It is difficult to say exactly what proportion of the textile plants in North Carolina is represented in this study. Indeed, it is difficult to say just how many textile plants there are in North Carolina. The Census of 1920 gave the number of establishments for cotton manufacturing (including cotton goods, cotton knit goods, and cotton small wares) as 311 and the wage-earners as 67,297. The report of the State Commissioner of Labor and Printing for 1919–20 gave 377 cotton, 169 knitting, and 2 cordage mills making 548 of the same classification as the census. The number of wage-earners is given as 80,085. It is likely that the national census reports some companies as single establishments even though they may consist of two or more plants. As has already been pointed out, these units may be widely enough separated to constitute distinct communities and may present very different aspects in village life and in welfare work. On the other hand, the figures of the North Carolina Department of Labor and Printing[13] repeat in the list of knitting mills some which have already been enumerated among the cotton mills because they spin their yarns as well as knit them. For example, in the latest report, for 1925–26—to bring it down to the period in which this survey was made—Durham Hosiery Mill No. 4 at Carrboro appears in both lists. Again, there are some cases where a footnote explains that the plant is idle. Morrisville Hosiery Mill, thus noted in the 1925–26 report, has not, according to local citizens, run for several years.

In the matter of employees the figures of the State Commissioner do not exactly fit our present purposes. There are some mills which bleach or dye and finish their product all in one plant, and men employed in these operations are included in the total number. But in the case of the large companies which have separate finishing plants, such as the Proximity Manufacturing Company and the Carolina Cotton and Woolen Mills Company, these plants do not appear in the list of textile industries, and presumably their employees are not included in the totals for the industry. Besides the occasional repetition

[13] *Biennial Reports* (Raleigh: 1919–20, 1923–24).

of cotton mills in the hosiery mill list, there are some plants which made no report of the number of employees; but it may be that the textile workers counted in the "miscellaneous factories" counterbalance the repetition. At any rate, the Commissioner's total (1925–26) of 97,575 represents only roughly the number of workers.

The present survey includes forty-nine hosiery and knitting mills employing 7,427 workers. The North Carolina Department of Labor and Printing lists 129 plants and 13,663 workers. This survey includes thirteen miscellaneous textile plants such as bleacheries, processing plants, a few wool and silk mills, a garment factory, and a braiding factory. These employ 2,508 workers. It is difficult to say how many the Department of Labor reckons for this group because some are included in cotton mills and some in miscellaneous factories. Finally, the present survey includes 260 cotton mills employing 56,243 workers. The report of the Commissioner gives 406 plants with 83,518 workers.

In all, this study covers 322 plants employing 66,178 operatives. Thus it includes two-thirds of the total number of employees, 97,575, as given by the North Carolina State Department of Labor and Printing. While it covers slightly less than 60 per cent of the 556 plants given in the Commissioner's report as the total number of cotton, knitting, silk, cordage, and woolen mills, if allowance is made for repetition and idle plants it is likely that the study covers almost the same proportion of plants as of employees.

There are mills in sixty-three of the one hundred counties in the state; this study includes mills in fifty-three counties. In the ten other counties there are fifteen mills, seven having one mill each, two having two mills each, and one having four small plants. The study includes some of the largest single units and groups in the state; it also includes one knitting mill with six workers and two spinning mills with fewer than fifty workers each. Most of the plants, single units or parts of chains, have between a hundred and three hundred workers. In respect to size, then, the study is representative. It includes managers who are frankly hard-boiled and some who are frankly paternalistic and all stages between. It includes managers who pride themselves on not meddling with their em-

ployees' affairs—"we pay good wages and let them get what they want"; it includes managers who pride themselves on "doing a lot for our people." The detailed accounts in the following chapters will, it is believed, show that the study is representative in the matter of mill policy.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

These 322 plants, then, seem to be typical of the five hundred-odd textile plants in the state in type of plant, size, location, and managerial policy. What do they do in the way of extra-mill activities, of welfare work for the comfort and well-being, social, moral, intellectual, and physical, of their employees? As will be reiterated, probably to the point of tedium, it is well-nigh impossible to make many general statements that will apply with equal truth to all the mills. It should be clearly understood that the generalizations ventured in this chapter are only rough summaries of a great mass of data which needs to be studied in at least as much detail as it is presented in the longer descriptions in succeeding chapters.

A word of explanation is perhaps necessary here to make clear the reason for discussing differently or at least making exceptions of hosiery mills, a practice which will continue throughout the volume. This type of plant is organized quite differently from the regular cotton mill. It employs mainly women and girls instead of all the available workers from a family. Hence it is usually located in a town where the other members of the family can find work; or perhaps it is better to say that hosiery mills have sprung up in towns where industries employing men are already established. The towns of High Point, Lexington, Thomasville, Ashboro, and Hickory are instances of hosiery mills growing up beside furniture factories. These plants, using surplus labor from another industry, rarely find it necessary to build houses; the workers form no definite unit or neighborhood, but are scattered over the whole town, so that there is not the invitation to, or the apparent necessity for, community or other formal welfare work. For the same reason, as well as because of the fact that these plants are almost invariably inside town limits, there has been no necessity for direct aid to schools and other institu-

tions. The outside activities of the regular hosiery mill that does not spin its own yarn (if it does, it is organized like any cotton mill) are limited to informal, personal work.

1. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Before 1880 it was common for a school to be provided only some years after the little new mill village had made its appearance. About half of the schools were started by the mill owners or were in some way directly due to their efforts, the others being the regular public town or county schools. From 1880 to 1900 the slowly growing sentiment for schools in North Carolina is reflected in the fact that sixty-nine out of the seventy mills included in this study, which were built during those two decades, had some sort of free schools available from the beginning of the mill. Again, about half of the schools were initiated by the public, and about half had direct assistance from the mills in getting started. This was the period when the mills began the policy of supplementing the short public school term. The period from 1900 to the years of expansion during the World War was a time of rapidly growing interest in schools in North Carolina. The mills, built now mainly in or near towns, were in areas already provided with schools, though new ones were often built for the new villages. Managements began in this period to use their influence and even some pressure to secure school attendance. They began supplementing teachers' salaries to insure a better teaching force. These were years of great mill influence in the many little local schools. From 1919 the tendency has been toward consolidation, special charter and special tax schools, and the drawing of the children of suburban mill workers into town school systems. Despite the fact that textile leaders express the fear that they are educating the children out of the mills, many of the more progressive mill managers have begun to show interest in increasing the high school attendance of their village youth.

All through these years interest of the mills in education is certainly evident. Only eighteen plants (all except two of which are very small) have not aided schools if there was nothing better available than the county term and the county

teachers. But mill influence on schools in North Carolina seems to have been exaggerated, for 175 plants out of our 322 have never promoted schools because they have always been a part of a town, county consolidated, or some other special educational system. Even if we subtract the forty-nine knitting mills from this number, we still find a good proportion which have always had regular public school service. The situation in 1926 shows the trend: Employees of 207 of the 322 plants were served by town systems; twenty-one by county consolidated or other long-term schools; forty-four by county schools, of which twenty-eight are still supplemented by the mills. The children of all except 2,000 employees (in sixteen plants) of the 66,000 covered in this study were served by something better than a county six-months term.

In the matter of night classes, the interest of the mill owners or someone close to the management had to be keen and very personal to make a class sucessful. Such interest seems to have been very rare. There were found in this study only about a dozen mills which had had night classes before 1914. Most of these classes were spasmodic or short-lived. The Moonlight School enthusiasm added only eighteen to the above number. Far surer in interest, in support, in material, and in control have been the public vocational classes put on since 1919. In the eight years since that date 104 different mills among the 322 studied[14] have started these classes designed to help the man on his job and to prepare him for a better one.

2. AID OF CHURCHES

In matters relating to education the mills seem to be turning most of their earlier activities over to public agencies. This is not true in the field of religion. Rare indeed is the mill management—except among the knitting mills in the midst of a town—which does not still aid one or several churches. All except twenty-one cotton mills, thirty-eight knitting mills, and five specialty textile plants have aided either in building or in supporting churches, or in both. Quite as many furnish leadership

[14]A total of 153 different mills in North Carolina have had such classes at some time during those years.

in church life from among the ranks of the management. There is no apparent tendency to be drawn into town church groups as the mills become part of the town and are served by its schools.

3. COMMUNITY WORK

The personal and volunteer work of the members of the management, so evident in the churches, plays quite as prominent a part in the community work of North Carolina mills. Out of 322 only sixteen plants belonging to four companies had paid community workers before 1914. Eighty more mills, making up forty welfare units, put on community workers during the World War, of which twenty-seven units, or forty-seven plants, have since discontinued them. Community houses have always been fewer in number than community workers or community work units. While common among the large plants, community work with a paid leader is rare in North Carolina mills as a whole because of their small size. Many of the small units are making use of new county officials to supply their needs for domestic science teaching, case work, and even in some cases club work. Baseball teams, which are very common, and bands, which are less so, have been aided by the mills since the early nineties.

4. HEALTH WORK

As with community work, the small mills have been slow to employ health workers, with the exception of a few having health programs of long standing. This field of welfare work developed, however, from a source exactly the opposite of that from which community work developed. In the latter, volunteer work grew into programs headed by mill-employed leaders, who are now gradually being displaced, in the case of small mills, by public workers. In the field of health the public and semi-public agents, such as county and Red Cross nurses, often became available before any nurses were employed by the mills. General sanitation inspections and vaccination programs have long been carried out, but visiting nurses and classes in the care of health and of the sick date, in the main, from the first influenza epidemic in 1918. They are still rather scattered and tend to be spasmodic. When a nurse leaves—and this is also

true of community workers to a certain extent—a successor is not hired if busines is dull.

5. MISCELLANEOUS EXTRA-MILL ACTIVITIES

Besides these more commonly known types of welfare work many special schemes have been developed or adopted, each by relatively few plants. Company stores were common at the early mills, but the increase of suburban mills and better transportation, together with the disadvantages, financial and psychological, of the "company store" have served to stunt their growth and even to eliminate some that formerly existed. There have been only sixty-three company stores, serving some seventy-five plants, among the 322 mills here covered. In 1926 there were twenty-four regular company stores and eleven others which were virtually such, most of the stock belonging to the mill or its owners. This form of mill activity is rather rapidly going out of style.

A newer scheme, now popular and still growing, is group insurance, a development since 1916. Mill policy regarding insurance is undergoing a vital change. At first the mills paid in the entire premium; in practically all new schemes the mill and the workers share in the payment of the premium, and some old ones are being converted to this basis. In 1926 there were among the 322 mills included in this study forty plants, representing twenty-four companies and employing 11,300 workers, which had some form of group insurance in force. Fifty-two plants employing 10,500 workers have had it and dropped it for one reason or another—misunderstanding, too great expense, or the like.

The encouragement of gardens and saving plans and the sale of wood and coal are old and widespread activities. Village aldermen plans for democratic control of village problems, schemes of industrial democracy, personnel departments, and plant papers, are recent and rare. They are still in the experimental stage.

6. HOUSING

Housing, formerly almost as necessary to production as the mill machinery itself, has gradually become a welfare activity

in many North Carolina mills. While they do not house all the workers—the findings of this study seem to indicate that about 70 per cent are housed—they now provide more comfortable and more attractive villages than formerly. Ten plants employing 1,490 workers had the simplest houses, not even equipped with electric lights. Ninety-five plants with 22,000 workers had electric lights but no other modern conveniences. Thirty-nine plants with 6,397 workers had lights and running water. Ninety-seven plants with 21,037 workers had lights, running water, and inside toilets. Fifteen plants with 3,798 workers had lights, baths, and sewerage. Usually it is the newer mills that furnish more of these conveniences. Rent for all houses below the class equipped with baths ranges from nothing to about twenty-five cents a room a week; those having baths usually rent for fifty cents a room a week. The subsidy on houses is difficult to ascertain. According to the rough figures furnished by mill managers for this study, it runs from fifty dollars to two hundred dollars a year for each dwelling, depending on the type of house and the rent charged.

CONCLUSION

Even this inadequate summary indicates that the extra-mill activities of North Carolina plants are still in a formative state. Many are frankly recognized as experiments. Many more experiments have already been abandoned, some no doubt without leaving any traces to be discovered by such a study as this. A belief in welfare work—taking the term in its broadest sense—is common and continuous in the great majority of North Carolina plants. In the case of schools and churches, and more recently of housing, the work itself is also continuous. Respecting most other forms of welfare it is somewhat casual and intermittent. The following chapters will discuss in some detail the activities of the mill management or its representatives, not only in the major institutions of school, church, and community, but also in health, housing, and a multitude of other phases of mill village life.

CHAPTER III

THE MILLS AND THE SCHOOLS

REASON FOR THE INTEREST OF THE COTTON MILLS IN SCHOOLS

THE MILL, especially adapted to the creation of a one-industry town and of a complete community, often collected groups of families in places either where no school already existed or where there was none near at hand. One of the most widely recognized needs of any village has been, at least for the last fifty years, some sort of school; and these families newly drawn to the mills had known little enough of schools and schooling.

But it must be confessed that while everyone no doubt considered a school a prime necessity for any settlement of families, public policy and public finance in North Carolina, lacking perhaps the power of opinion behind them, did not provide as many schools as were required. Certainly both policy and finance would at that time have been unequal to the strain of establishing schools in the little mill villages which were springing up overnight all over the state. And it must be admitted, further, that the people of the new villages would hardly have made any effective effort to secure schools for themselves. They were for the most part recruited from an economically underprivileged rural class who had little or no education, whose children did not attend the poor little district schools that were available, who, far from wanting education, had rather a prejudice against it, and who had little vision to lead them in the right direction. The mill builders, on the other hand, were *ipso facto* men of some degree of leadership, usually with fair education, if not indeed professional training, and they usually were farsighted enough to realize that they would have a higher grade of villagers if the latter could be given some education. They hoped to attract a steadier, soberer, more hardworking class of people, the kind of men who were willing to work themselves instead of sending their wives and

children to the mill while they loafed at the store. Under the auspices of such mill men, supplementing the efforts of public leaders, popular interest in education gradually spread to the mill villagers until it became a driving instead of a leading force: during the last two decades mills indifferent to school facilities have been obliged to be satisfied with the poorest type of people.

The mill owner had a further reason for thinking that a school would pay. Much attention has recently been called to the assumption on the part of New England that the South, though able to beat the older textile centers in the manufacture of coarse goods, could not compete in the making of fine goods. In the eighties and early nineties New England was saying that the South could produce coarse yarn but could not weave; in the nineteen-hundreds, that it might weave but would never finish its fabrics. And no doubt the Southern mill man was answering these arguments then as he is now: that he could, when his workers were more skilled, and that they would be more skilled when they had better general and technical education. Several of the older mill men of the state, in interviews during this study, harked back to the days when they had to depend for superintendents and other skilled men upon the North, and to the clumsy days just following when they were handicapped with foremen able beyond question in much of their work, but so illiterate that they could not keep the simplest records or calculate machine settings different from those they had learned by rule of thumb. Such managers must have looked forward to the time when the boys growing up with practical experience in the mills would have had enough education to enable them to do these things, just as today they look forward to the time when some of their younger hands will be prepared to push on into the study of chemistry and electricity. They even had an interest in education for others besides the few who might become foremen. One man, considered among the most successful and progressive manufacturers of the state, could not be too emphatic in expressing his favor of education even of the common school variety because he had seen a decided improvement in the quality of the output since the level of education had begun to rise.

And finally, of course, we must include in all these reasons,

selfish and otherwise, for the mills' interest in schools, one that in a fair proportion of the earlier mills played an important part, namely, the philanthropic interest of the owner in the children of his workers.

DEVELOPMENT OF MILL RELATIONS TO SCHOOLS

For consideration of this phase of the outside activity of the mills, it seems convenient to distinguish four periods according to the date of the schools' beginnings. Fortunately these periods coincide with logical divisions both in public school history and in the development of the mills. First there is the time before 1880. The present study includes nineteen mills founded within this period. Prior to 1880 the industry was largely in an experimental stage, and the schools, after a brief period of advance in the fifties under Wiley,[1] had gone the way of most early progress in North Carolina, namely, into the fiery furnace of war and the more devastating aftermath of reconstruction.[2] It was in the very late seventies before any noticeable recovery was made; so that 1880 forms a convenient dividing point, coincident with the rise of the mills. From 1880 to 1900 the mills were in a stage of vigorous growth. Most of the natural water power resources capable of exploitation without expensive development were harnessed to cotton mills; every progressive town considered a mill as a proof of its progress and necessary to its community pride. This study covers seventy-seven mills that were built during this time. It was the stage, in school history, of painful attempts, barely successful, to maintain the gains of the later eighteen-seventies; the period of the rise of teachers' institutes and town graded school systems. Except for these two things it was a time of standstill: there was very little increase in the length of terms or in the general quality of instruction.[3] The third period, 1900–1918, witnessed in the mills the rise of the knitting industry and of weaving, the development of steam and hydro-

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[1]Edgar W. Knight, *Public School Education in North Carolina* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), chap. IX.

[2]*Ibid.*, chap. XII.

[3]*Ibid.*, chap. XIV.

electric mills. There are 151 plants in this group. In the schools it was the period of educational awakening under the guidance of the state's educational pioneers of the first decade of the century—Aycock, McIver, and others. Finally, the period from 1919 to the present has been, for the mills, a period of readjustment after war conditions, of expansion by means of the investment of war earnings in new mills. Likewise it has been the period of the most marked effort at diversification of products. In this study there are seventy-five plants belonging to these years. For the schools it has been a time of consolidation, of better certification laws (passed in 1917 but delayed by the war from going into effect until the school year 1919–20), of special tax districts, of the building of excellent school houses.

FIRST PERIOD—BEFORE 1880

The sources of information on the older mills are so meager that the complete story is impossible. Of the nineteen plants studied which were founded in this period, all were water power mills, one in an unincorporated town, two on the edge of towns, and the others in the open country, near streams where few people had lived. Therefore, in sixteen localities the mills built up new villages where none had existed. Some of the group have changed hands, three of them several times. For this reason, and because of other local conditions, no one could be found who knew at first hand, or by tradition even, the early history of these three. And unfortunately such history is so local in its nature that if it is not remembered by some one still living or has not been passed on by word of mouth, there is little possibility of recovering it. In the case of the remaining sixteen mills the situation is somewhat better, though of course the exactness of the data for years prior to 1880 cannot be too much relied upon. For instance, when we are told that a school was started before 1840 or that there always was a country district school near a mill which was opened before the Civil War we can feel confident only that such a school dates from the eighteen-seventies at best.

The mill at Randleman, started about 1840, was the nucleus of a town which was incorporated in 1880 and which began to operate a town free school a few years later. For a generation

before, it had been served by a private subscription school known as Ed Coble's school, of the academy type common all over the state. Starting with one teacher, Coble himself, it grew until it had seven or eight before it was replaced by the town school. The mill helped this school with its running expenses, but the oldest inhabitant to be found confessed that not very many of the mill children attended.

A little country district school in Alamance County served one of the oldest mills in the state; later, one was built nearer the mill. There was a school here from before 1870, at the latest, for employees still living remember attending it "just after the surrender." They are of the opinion that it must have been running for some years before the war, since within their memory it was not new. It was a free county school of a two-months term, with three months added by private subscription. The sons and grandsons of the founder of the mill, E. M. Holt, went there with the children of surrounding country families and those few mill employees who attended. Governor Morehead's mill near Leaksville (the nucleus of what later became Spray), built in 1839 soon after the Alamance Mill, had, according to fairly authoritative information, subscription schools dating from just after the Civil War but no free school till about 1880. And yet Miss Clem Moxley, a millworker born in 1841, who was employed there from the age of thirteen, insists that she went to a free school before leaving the town about the beginning of the war. "They ran it in the summers when the mill could not run on account of low water." As her memory was extremely accurate on other points it is likely that she would have remembered her early school days, and in a family of the economic status of hers the matter of paying tuition would have made an impression. Whether the mill or the county supported it was not so clear to her and would of course have been of little interest to a child.

Another of the oldest mills, Great Falls, has been in the town limits of Rockingham since it was opened in 1839, the only one built within a town. It has always been more completely a part of the town than most early mills and never had to concern itself officially with schools, as the old residential town of Rockingham was somewhat in advance of rural sections. The mill at Turnersburg, started in 1845, may have been

served by a county school near by, but the first school in the village was built in 1870 by the owner. It was run as a subscription school, all patrons paying some tuition and Mr. Turner making up the difference. His own children attended it also. In 1872 the county took it over as a free school on the regular county term, then about three months, and the mill supplemented the term for two or three months. It remained on this basis until the special tax and consolidation plan became effective recently.

The Rocky Mount Mill was built in 1818 and was operated with slave labor till 1852. The first school of which there is now any recollection was a town free school started in 1878, to which mill children were entitled to, and did, go. But it collapsed in 1886 owing to the court decisions requiring equal per capita division of tax revenue between white and Negro schools. In the meantime, however, two little county schools had been started near the mill village. In 1885 a new management took charge of the mill and, among other things, built a school in the village and for several years operated it entirely, until public free schools in that locality were on a surer basis. After that the mill supplemented the county term.

Of the remaining nine plants, two built in the eighteen-fifties and one in the sixties were near county schools from their beginning. In the eighteen-nineties they began supplementing the county term. Another plant, started in the fifties, some twenty years later furnished the land and building for a school in the village. A fifth, built in the seventies, was on the edge of a little town and used whatever school there was in the town, at first a county school and later a graded school. Three others, one built in 1860 and two in the following decade, were served by schools started in the eighties by the county. Later all three of these mills built schools in their villages, for the people were no longer satisfied with a school a mile or two away. These also supplemented the term. The last of the nineteen plants built in this period had an interesting experience. Opening its mill near an old town in the eighteen-seventies, the company built a school soon after and, according to all available information, supported it for a few years. However, the village was incorporated shortly after as a separate town, and then the new town, which was practically the mill, sup-

ported the school. There is a tradition that it was kept open eleven months in the year, but the long term became so unpopular with the villagers that it was reduced to ten months and finally, some ten years ago, to nine. When the town was finally made a special tax district a few years ago in the consolidation movement the term became eight months.

Other details of the operation of these schools would perhaps better be reserved until we deal with the periods in which they occurred, since they will typify the attitude of mill owners, workers, and public more than those of the days before 1880, when there was little sentiment for education.

Briefly, the relation between the mills studied and the schools can be stated thus: in three cases the information secured is too uncertain to be of any value; five plants used, without any share in support by the mill as such, county or town schools to which the children were entitled to go; four others did not help noticeably in the maintenance of schools until about 1900; while seven actually promoted schools for employees' children before 1880. Some helped by aiding a private school, or by starting a subscription school and paying a part of the cost so that the mill children could attend, the mill furnishing the land or building the schoolhouse, or doing both. Of course it seems plain that with most of the older mills there was often a long period after the mill started before a school was provided; and after it was provided there is no certainty that the children attended even as much as their modest opportunities permitted. One after another of the men interviewed explained, as he told of these early schools, that "mighty few attended" since they did not have to go. With no compulsory law and not even the slightest compulsion by public opinion anywhere in the state, especially among such a group of illiterate people as the mill workers, absence from school was more approved than attendance. Contributing also to this state of affairs was the fact that children were allowed by law and by custom, nay even required by the latter, to start work early because their earnings were needed, because the mill wanted as many hands as possible from its company houses, and most of all because in the pinched rural economy from which the families came it was traditional and permissible for the children to work. For all these positive and negative reasons the

attendance upon the existing schools must have been very small indeed.

SECOND PERIOD—1880 TO 1899

The period from 1880 to 1899 was one of rapid expansion in the cotton industry; new mills were built more rapidly than ever before. According to the Census of 1880 there were forty-nine cotton manufacturing plants in North Carolina. In 1900 there were 177. Seventy-seven of the mills included in our study were built in these two decades. Of these, thirty-six were located inside the corporate limits of towns, five in unincorporated towns, thirteen in suburbs, and twenty-three in the country. Of the last number, twenty-two were located where they were in order to take advantage of water power. While it has been easier to get data on the schools which served the mills of this group than it was for the earlier period, there are still, no doubt, many inaccuracies arising from the difficulty of finding out whether a public free school existed in the town or rural community at the time of the building of the mill. By the beginning of this period public schools were fairly common in areas of denser population; yet no doubt it sometimes happened that even when a mill was reported as having always been inside town limits or inside the town school district there was no graded school system at all and only the simplest sort of free school. Especially would this be true in the case of the older mills and those in the smaller towns. It has hardly seemed within the province of this study to verify the dates on which public schools were opened in all the many towns and districts concerned—after all we are interested here in its presence or absence chiefly as it reveals mill policy and practice. Out of the seventy-seven mills, fifty-six (of which thirty-eight were in towns and eighteen in the country) reported some sort of public school available when the mill began operation; but, of these, several built schools or lent the county a tenement house in order to get a school nearer than the one already existing. Others of this number operated a school in the village for a few years until the county or town took it over; still others ran a kindergarten for the smaller children, leaving the older ones—if any wished to do so—to attend the regular school farther away.

We can say then, briefly, that fifty-six out of the seventy-seven mills already had schools, thirteen started schools with the founding of the mill, these being all built by the mill and operated variously: by the town, one; by the county, eight; and by the mill, four. The remaining eight mills had no schools at the start but in each case one was built later: by the town, three; by the county, two; and by the mill, three. They were at first operated: by the town, three; by the county, three; by the mill, two. But when we have arranged mills and schools in these categories the story is only begun. It is of course impossible to give in detail the experience of each mill of this group; yet only by some such examination can we learn the nature and extent of the mills' educational activities.

First of all we can dispose quickly of forty, or over half of the number in this group of seventy-seven, since they have never had any relation to schools except as taxpayers. In these cases the mill children attended the same schools as the children of the town or country near by. Thirty-four of these forty were inside town limits or town school districts. Of the remaining six, one was in a suburb which constituted a very early special tax district; another was a concern of absentee Northern ownership; a third formed the nucleus of a quickly growing and soon incorporated town; while the remaining three were, and still are, small country mills of sixty, thirty, and fifteen employees. The manager of one mill inside town limits confessed that he had favored setting up a separate school for the mill children on the side of the town nearest the mill because he "thought, since most of the families the mill was bringing in were from the country, or were very poor people, that the other children would run over the mill children or would look down on them, and the children and their families would be better satisfied in a school to themselves. You know how town children often make country children feel bad. But the school board would not agree to the separate school, and I think now it has been better this way. We have not had the trouble of it—would have had to see about coal and all sorts of details, even though it was a part of the town system—and the children get a benefit from mingling with the others. And they stand up for themselves all right—no running over them here, I can tell you!"

There are remaining, then, thirty-seven mills of this period which were so situated, or had a management so minded, as to find it desirable to do something to foster education. Twenty-two of these built the school building, and one lent the town, and two the county, a tenement house to be used as a school. One ran a kindergarten which also took the primary grade in order to keep the small children from having to go so far, seven supplemented rural school terms, and four claim that the manager took the lead in getting started a town system to which the mill children then went as well as all others. Seven of the mills that built schools also supported them entirely for periods varying from one year to ten or twelve. Eight of the group that built schools supplemented the terms as well, so that we have fifteen which did a double chore in school matters.

Perhaps some of the experiences stated less baldly will serve better to show the attitude toward schools in this period. In the case of a small country mill which depended upon a county district school about two miles away the wife of the owner, living at the mill, taught a little school there for three or four years during the eighteen-nineties for the accommodation of the employees until the area was made into a school district. Then the mill built the school and the county operated it. In this instance, as in several others, the mill supplemented the term whenever the attendance showed sufficient interest to warrant it. At Roanoke Rapids Mr. John Armstrong Chaloner, largely interested financially in the projected mill, built a little school for the children of the workmen as a private philanthropy when construction on the mill started, so that there was really a "mill school" there for two years before the mill itself began operation. In the case of the Morgan Mills the owner, living near the mill and some distance from the county school, kept a governess for his children, who taught other children in the neighborhood, including as many of the mill children as would come. Other experiences of individual mills in relation to schools which occurred during the next period will be described later, since, as we have said, they will thus more clearly reflect the stage of development of popular and mill opinion toward education.

Of the nineteen schools considered in our first period, the

status from 1880 to 1899 was as follows: four had become town systems; thirteen were county schools, of which in nine instances the terms were being supplemented by the mills; and information as to the other two was too indefinite to include here, though it is unlikely that their terms were being supplemented. The village in which one mill was located was incorporated in the eighteen-nineties, but for a village so small that fact is no assurance that a town school system was set up. All it could boast was doubtless a little county school, as the consensus of opinion among scattered informants was that the mill had never supplemented the term or shown any interest in the school.

To summarize, then, out of ninety-six mills included in the two earlier periods there were, by 1899, thirty-eight in town or special school districts. Of the remaining fifty-eight, all gave some sort of financial encouragement to nearby schools except six of the older group (before 1890) and four of the later. Seven of these ten mills employed one hundred or fewer workers. Briefly, the mills of these decades, if those included in our study are representative—and there is reason to believe that they are truly so—were becoming increasingly interested in schools: during the second period only eight out of the seventy-seven were served by schools provided later than the beginning of the mill, and most of the older mills that had not interested themselves before swung then into line.

The quality of these schools is another matter. Most of them were apparently little one-teacher schools, no less drab than those in rural and village communities all over the state. It seems likely that the average quality of the teachers was somewhat lower than in schools in other types of communities of similar size, for the mill community was looked down on socially and would attract less capable teachers. The missionary spirit of that day was vastly more interested in the uttermost ends of the earth than in the child next door. Such phases of it as began at home saw the need of Sunday schools or churches, or at most of relief work, rather than the service of teaching.

Whether the children attended such schools as they had is still another matter. Again, as in the older period, we are reminded in case after case that "very few went to school," or

that a "one-teacher school was sufficient because few children went to school." Public opinion in favor of education was growing very slowly indeed, and the new mills were still bringing into the villages a steady stream of people who were strongly opposed, or at most indifferent, to education. The interest of the mill owners was increasing enough for them to see that schools were provided, if they had to do it themselves; few of them were quite ready to put pressure on their employees to require them to send the children to school. At least, however, it is probable that before 1900 a large percentage of the children living in mill villages had some sort of schooling and had it closer at hand than most children in the state as a whole, and indeed than all except those living in towns of, say, a thousand population or more.

THIRD PERIOD—1900 TO 1918

The period between 1900 and 1918 is the time of most rapid development of the mills in North Carolina, the period in which the industry forged forward until it ranked first in the number of establishments, second in the number of textile workers, and third in spindles among the textile states. Little country water power rights capable of development for the needs of a single mill had been largely exploited by this time, so that out of the 151 mills examined which started operation in this period only eight used water power in rural districts. It was the period of the town and suburban mills: sixty inside incorporated towns, fifty-five suburban to incorporated towns, eight constituting incorporated towns themselves, and nine in unincorporated towns. Only nineteen were country mills. It was also the period of the rise of the knitting mills: twenty-six of the town mills, two of the suburban mills, and two of the rural mills (actually in very small villages) were knitting establishments.

Of the 151 mills belonging to this period, 109 were in communities already served by a school. As before, this does not always mean that a new school was not built more convenient to the mill children soon after the mill started. This was the period of great school building activity in North Carolina, the time when everybody seemed to consider it necessary to

have a school within a short walking distance of his home, in contrast with the earlier period when a school three or four miles away was considered reasonably near, and also in contrast with the more recent days when consolidation and good roads and trucks are putting schools farther apart again.

Of the forty-two remaining mills every one had a school provided at the beginning of the mill, in contrast with our earliest period when some were not set up until the mill had been in operation for years. This fact in itself is an indication of the importance of education in the opinion of both the workers and employers. The mills built thirty-three of these schools, the county eight, and the town one. These were controlled as follows: two by the town, thirty-five by the county, and five by the mill temporarily until taken over by town or county.

Of the 151 mills in this group, sixty-four aided schools directly and financially in some other way than through taxation. Since there were only forty-two that did not have schools available, this means that some set up new schools in town districts. There were only three mills in this group of forty-two which did not help with schools in any direct way during this period. One of these was located near a large town and was in a county that has had an advanced school system; so it is possible that the county school was of an unusually good quality. The other two were small mills of 100 and 135 employees.

The nature of the assistance varied greatly. In a few cases it was slight. For instance, two mills gave the land only, a relatively small contribution considering the low price of land; and in view of the fact that the mills usually owned large tracts it was probably to their advantage to give land rather than have the school elsewhere than near their villages. In two other cases the assistance was limited to incidentals, such as fuel and other supplies, but as it extended over a period of years—till the mills were taken into city limits—it may well have totaled more than what many of the little buildings cost. The favorite means of assistance in this period were building the school, supplementing the teacher's salary or the term or the number of teachers, or by several or all of these methods. Forty-three plants built schools in their villages, and several of

these later built new ones or made additions. Five others helped the county build the schools. One mill that built a school sold it soon after to the county. A few years ago this mill was taken into the city limits and its school consolidated with the city system. The mill then bought the schoolhouse back and remodeled it for a boarding house. One of the older mills of this period built a little house to serve as school and church. After a few years the town and the mill built a new school. A few years ago the town school district, aided by $5,000 from the mill, built a school at a cost of $12,000 to serve all children in the adjacent part of town through the fifth grade, the older children attending a central school.

Forty-seven of the mills of this period supplemented county school terms, not always up to nine months it is true, nor even to eight, though many did. The more usual method was to add two or perhaps three months to the county term. As this was, in the early part of the period under discussion, four months, the addition brought about a six or seven months' term. In most cases suburban mills extended the term so that it equaled that of the neighboring town schools. In the case of the country mills, we have an instance or two, as in the earlier period, in which the policy of supplementing varied with the interest of the people. One owner of a mill built in the period complained that the disorganization of war time moving and lack of interest greatly affected school attendance. Finally he served notice on his villagers that if they did not send their children with more regularity he would not feel justified in continuing to extend the term, and he actually did discontinue aid for two or three years.

During this period several mills, some started after 1900 and some earlier, found it desirable to supplement the teachers' salaries as well as the school terms. There seem to have been several reasons for this. In the first place, town and county special tax districts which offered more pay than the county scale were increasing more rapidly than the supply of well-trained teachers. Therefore, rather than take the poorest teachers common in little country schools, the mills found it necessary to add to the county salary rate. Secondly, the sensitiveness of young women to public opinion in the matter of social rating was such as to keep those who could get jobs

elsewhere—and hence the ablest ones—from taking positions in mill schools, particularly if the village was so located that they would have to live as well as work in such a community. It was necessary to make the salary a special inducement to prevent the mill villages from collecting the poorest teachers, and a number of the mills rose to the occasion. Toward the end of this period and into the next there was at least one group of large mills which added enough in the way of salary and yearly bonus, together with some freedom from city red tape, to attract teachers from the town near by. Teachers in the city schools put in their applications years ahead for places in the mill school.

Another new feature of this period was the insistence on the part of some mills upon school attendance. Interviews with executives discovered several among earlier mills, as well as among this group, who had had experience in trying to secure better attendance. Public opinion was gradually solving the old problem of "bucket-toters," the dependence of rural and mountain families who had moved to the mill on the work of the children while the father, often unused to regular work and unskilled in any occupation, took these disabilities as excuses to loaf—his chief usefulness consisting in carrying dinner to the boys and girls in the mill. Labor laws aided school attendance by slowly raising the working age, and public demand for schools and education was increasing. The mills, entering a period of development of finer goods, were finding it necessary to have more intelligent workers all along the line, and especially a better educated class from which to draw foremen and minor executives. Finally, wages were slowly rising, the pace being sharply accelerated toward the end of the period, so that it was now economically possible to spare the children to attend school. Another reason might be mentioned: mills that were putting money in buildings, teachers' salaries, and terms must have been convinced of the need of education. For these advantages to be unused or under-used was defeating their purpose. As employer in a community where no other work existed, and as landlord, the mill owner was in a position to exert some pressure. Thus we find a number of mills during this period insisting on school attendance. One executive told of meeting much opposition from the workers, so much, in

fact, that a number of families gave up their jobs and moved rather than comply.

This is the period of the greatest influence of mills on schools in North Carolina. For later, with the rapid rise of the consolidation idea, with the building of good roads to make it practicable, with the movement for the extension of city limits during, and just following, the war expansion, many schools, formerly aided and naturally largely controlled by the mills, passed into town or county consolidated systems.

FOURTH PERIOD: 1919 TO 1926

The remainder of the 322 mills falling within the scope of the present study were started between 1919 and 1926. Of these there are seventy-five, thirty-seven located inside town limits (fifteen of which are knitting mills), three in their own incorporated towns, three in unincorporated towns, thirty suburban, and two rural (of which one is a water power mill). Sixty-two of these were in districts already served by a school (thirty-nine town and twenty-three country), while in thirteen cases schools had to be started for the new community. The new buildings were built as follows: one by the town, five by the county, and seven by the mills; two were operated by the town and eleven by the county. In most cases their present status is the same as at the start; it is therefore unnecessary to discuss them in detail, as they will be covered in the discussion of the present status of all the schools, any special features being mentioned in the general summary. Whereas the chief problem of the period before was general attendance, the chief problem of this was to get the boys and girls to attend high school.

PRESENT STATUS

The 322 mills about which information was secured for this study were, in 1926 when the information was gathered, located as follows: 177 were inside the limits of regular incorporated towns; twenty-two were in incorporations which consisted of practically nothing except the mill and its village and in which the mills had taken the lead in securing the incorporation; sixteen were in unincorporated towns contain-

ing several mills or other interests; sixty-nine were in what may best be considered suburban areas; and thirty-eight were in country districts, of which thirty-three were water power mills, this fact accounting for the rural location. As to the status of the schools that served them, 207 were parts of town systems. In many cases there was only one school in the town; in some larger towns the mill children used a primary and elementary school serving their part of the town and later went to a centralized high school; in others only the primary school was located in the mill neighborhood, the children above the fourth or fifth grade going to a central school. In some cases the school formerly operated by the mill has had its district enlarged. In two or three cases the elementary school was still almost entirely a mill school owing to local conditions —a negro section adjoining, a railroad and shops separating the mill village from the rest of the town, and the like.

Seventy-one others were county consolidated schools or belonged in special tax or special charter districts, which means an eight or nine months' term. A few of these have only nine grades, but the majority have high schools or use trucks to take the children to the town high school where they attend without paying tuition. Forty-four are county schools. Of this number twenty-eight have their term supplemented by the mills, leaving sixteen mill communities served by six months' county schools. These sixteen mills employ a total of two thousand workers, averaging about one hundred and twenty-five workers in each. There are twenty-eight mills where the children who wish to attend high schools have to pay tuition for two or three months, depending on the length of the county and town terms. In a majority of cases street cars or trucks can be used, or the village is within walking distance of the high school, so that tuition is almost the only added expense. In about eight cases this is not true—a high school, while supposedly available, is too far away and without means of access.

As a matter of practice, however, it is a freely admitted fact that very few mill children attend high school where tuition must be paid. The tradition that the mill child shall go to work as soon as he is fourteen years old is still strong, and when it has to surmount such a difficulty as a tuition charge

for even a few months or any inconvenience in attending, the tendency to stop school is increased. In fact, observation seems to show that even when a mill is within town limits, if the children attend a school which is restricted by location to mill children up to the seventh grade, so that they have to transfer to another school about the time they are old enough to go to work, the tendency to drop out is far greater than when they transfer at the end of the fifth or the sixth grade. The situation is, in the opinion of the writer, partly psychological. The child and his family will make something of an effort to "finish" the school he has been attending even though it may take him beyond the working age, but in the six or seven-grade school he does not have the constant example and evidence of others going higher. It is unfortunately still true in most schools that mill children in some way encounter evidences of the social disesteem in which the "cotton mill class" is held. It is only too well known that children are as snobbish as their elders, and if they have heard the mill people or the mill section or the neighboring village referred to slightingly, it is only natural that they reflect some of it in their relations with the children of this class in the schoolroom or on the playground. If the mill child who has to meet this social atmosphere does so while he is still obliged to go to school and is younger and less sensitive than at adolescence, he has time to become adjusted and to make personal friends before he gets into high school. Then he finds the pull to finish high school as strong as any child of similar economic status. But if he must make the transfer just when everything at home pulls him away and when social forces drive him away, it is not surprising that he so seldom goes to high school. And to all these forces must be added the fact that the mill child can usually get a job, either because such is the policy of the mill or because his family can insist upon his having one lest they all leave the mill. After all, probably many a child from other social or economic groups continues in school because he cannot get work. Comments leading to the formation of this opinion were heard is scores of mills; one of the most striking statements was that of a mill executive who operated one mill inside town limits and another in a suburb. He said that the town mill had a school for the convenience of the small chil-

dren of the village, but they were transferred to the main school building of the town at the beginning of the fifth grade; in the suburban mill children continued at the local school till ready for high school. And though the town mill was smaller it furnished more children to the high school.

It would appear, then, that when it is possible from an administrative point of view, it would be a good policy for educational authorities to transfer children from small local schools to central ones as early as possible. The present tendency to do away with small decentralized schools and build large units is taking care of this difficulty gradually, and the fact that few North Carolina mills are large enough to need one of these large units will mean that the mill children will increasingly get the personal contacts which make continuance in high school easier.

INSTANCES OF EXPERIENCES WITH SCHOOLS

A few examples of the relations between specific mills and nearby schools will perhaps add a little individual interest to the dry bones of the foregoing statistics.

1. A certain suburban mill built a school when it first started and supplemented the county term, but the school would have been inadequate if any considerable number of the children had attended. In 1919 the mill was enlarged by one-third, and now employs about 250 or 300 hands. The mill then built a $40,000 school building which it still owns, and equipped a playground; the school now has six teachers and takes students to the eighth grade, the high school children going into town. In 1919 there were only sixty-five children in school, but in 1926, with the better building and after a general campaign to make attendance more popular, there were 218 pupils. The mill president was evidently very proud of the school. He had on his desk monthly reports of attendance, which he displayed as proof of the interest of the people and the children in schools.

2. A good-sized mill in a small town is now managed by the son of the founder. A few years before the latter died he made a gift of a magnificent school building, costing $350,000, to the town and the surrounding consolidated school district. His

son is taking great pleasure in seeing that the school is developed along the lines that his father wished, namely, as a community center for the whole town and nearby area. It has full high school equipment, domestic science rooms, laboratories, machine shops, carpenter shops, the best moving picture facilities—which are used a great deal, as the town is too small to support a good commercial movie—auditorium, club rooms, rooms equipped for various sorts of clinics. As a member of the school board the mill owner has worked hard to make the school principals see the possibilities of community life in a full use of the building. Apparently the plan is succeeding, since "all the people want is an excuse to come to the school."

3. A medium-sized mill in the country forms the chief part of a special school tax district. The manager is much interested in schools. In 1919 he tried to get a new school building to replace the old poor one. It was to cost $7,500, of which the county would furnish $2,000 and the district $5,500 by taxation under which, according to assessed valuations, the mill would pay $4,000 and the rest of the district $1,500. Mr. ——— said the farmers and home owners defeated the plan. One of the men who worked in the mill office and who owned a little property in the district did much to defeat it by talking against it among the mill folks. "In doing this he was a traitor to the mill" because he knew the management wanted a better school, and a traitor to the community, for it needed the school badly. The manager then added tersely: "He is not here any longer." In 1924 Mr. ——— managed things better. He arranged that the district should have the choice of building a school at the village with a fifty-cent increase in the school tax, or of being consolidated with a nearby town and pay a seventy-five-cent increase. This time the school project was carried through. The village now has a two-year high school and is gradually working toward a full four-year school.

4. An old country mill lent the county one of its cottages for a school many years ago. Later the county built a little frame school. Still later a third schoolhouse was built by the county on land given by the mill, and finally the present—a new—management has added a room to it to take care of an

increase in the size of the plant. An old employee called in to help in recounting the mill's history said that when the county term was four months or less the people in the village, aided by the "head men" of the mill, were accustomed to raise money enough to extend the term to six months. The school now runs for the county term, so that, relatively speaking, it was better off years ago than now. Incidentally this is the largest mill visited—150 employees until recent enlargements—with so poor a school history and present status, probably because it has changed hands so often.

5. A country mill some forty years old furnished a schoolhouse, supplemented the term, and sometimes added an extra teacher during its early history. Later the company built a large frame building and lent it rent free to the county. A few years ago the district was made a consolidated high school district supported by a special tax, the seven lower grades being taught in the village. The county now pays rent for the building—"can't give them everything with the tax put up thirty cents." The high school was built three-quarters of a mile away. "They tried to put it two or three miles away, but we outvoted them. No sense in putting it way off from the place where most of the children and the people who would use the building at night are. We made them put it near us," said the vigorous little old superintendent. "It is the best school in the state—you just ought to see its record in all sorts of things. One reason for its liveness is the fact that the people support it so well." It is almost a community center. People of the village go there for movies and plays two or three nights a week, whereas they were formerly compelled to go to the town about five miles away.

6. A large mill whose employees formed most of the population of a town later incorporated ran a school with two teachers for a few years, using at first a building erected to serve for school and church, then a dwelling, and later a little house built for the school. As the mill increased the town of course did also, until in 1900 the mill built an eight-room frame school—then having four teachers—which the county operated, the mill supplementing the term. In 1924 the county board approached the mill management regarding a new building, saying that without help they could not build a new school

needed to replace the one the mill had erected years before. The mill gave the land and furnished the equipment and still supplements the county term by two months. There is now a good brick building, quite creditable for a town of the size, and a school in which the mill manager and indeed the whole population appear to take great pride. It has two years of high school work, the upper classes being taken in a consolidated-school truck to the county seat some two miles away. The pupils have to pay tuition for the two months that the latter school runs beyond the county term, but in this case it does not seem to prevent a considerable number's attending. In 1925 the graduates of the consolidated high school from the mill town outnumbered those from the county seat, though it must be said that the mill town is about one-third larger than the county seat.

7. The management of a small isolated country mill, considering the little county school "across the hill" (almost a mountain) too far away, built a two-teacher school near the village, and the county ran it. Some years ago the mill and the county together built the present ten-grade, six-teacher school. In this case the coöperation was quite literal—the mill gave the land and furnished some of the material and part of the labor. This latter was supplied by some of the regular employees of the mill. The manager appealed to their pride to get the job done as soon as possible as a service to the community. As a result of these various savings the school cost a full third less than it would have cost by contract. It is now a consolidated school, the mill adding two months to the term and supplementing the salaries, "because we hire teachers that we think are good and have to pay that kind more than the regular scale." The mill management carries some insurance on the school building to protect their interest in it, because "if it were to get burned the county and the community would expect us to help build another and it might not be convenient to fork over the entire amount at once." This has to be done indirectly through the school board, as some of the higher school authorities "would raise Cain if they knew about it, on account of the rule that the mills must not own the schools if the county helped any in the building."

8. A medium-sized mill, formerly just outside town limits

but always in the town school district, has furnished a building, rent free, to the town to use for a school convenient to the children ever since the town school system was inaugurated about 1900. In 1920 the extension of the town toward the mill warranted the building of a new school to serve the mill and adjacent sections.

9. A good-sized mill whose employees form about half the population of a small incorporated town has, from its beginning nearly thirty years ago, furnished the building for a two-teacher, four-grade school and supplemented the county term. The older children went to the town school. About twelve years ago the town asked that it might also take over the school in the village because of some personal friction with parents over which children should go to which school, and, to avoid certain social distinctions, it was thought best to make the school in the mill end of town a part of the town system.

10. A very old country mill has always been limited to the county term for its children's schooling. At present the school extends through the eighth grade. If any wish to go to high school they can choose among three at about equal distances from the village. "But they don't ever go. Their parents feel that when a child reaches fourteen and has gone to school till then he has a lot more education than they themselves had and that he has enough to do with."

11. A little water power mill has existed for nearly forty years within three miles of what is at present a very progressive town. Until the last three years there have been almost no school facilities for the villagers. They are just outside the town school district and seem to have been in a forgotten corner all these years. The present owner, who has been there only a short time, insists that there has never been a school for the children of the village to attend. While this seems almost unbelievable it is certainly a fact that the children never attended school; most of the grown men and women in the village cannot read and write. Three years ago this area was made a special tax district, and the county built a school and employed an excellent teacher. The people, very proud of having a good school at last, are sending the children regularly. They claim the best attendance in the county.

12. A certain small suburban mill built a little schoolhouse

in 1910, the year the mill started. The county ran it for the regular county term, the mill supplementing this in order to equal the term in the adjoining town. After several years the county declared the school was too great an expense and finally closed it. The larger children went to the town school. For a year or so the mill provided a kindergarten and primary teacher in the village. In 1917 the whole area was taken into the town school district.

13. A large mill built on what was at the time the outskirts of a town had a county school aided by the mill. In 1916 the village was taken into the limits of the city that had then practically surrounded it and the children attended the city schools. This city had a system of book rental by fee which the manager feared might discourage the mill children from attending. The mill, therefore, has ever since furnished the book fees for children of employees. This amounts to about $600 a year. "We did not want the children to have an excuse for not going to school, or the parents for not sending them."

14. The first mill on the south side of Rockingham used one of its tenement houses for a school and hired a teacher for a seven months' term. After new mills were built they all joined in supplementing the county term. In 1909 the county built a schoolhouse. By 1920 the number and size of mills had increased until the community had completely outgrown the school. Three of the mills gave land and $10,000 each, with which was built a twelve-room school. In 1924 the area was made a special tax district, and a bond issue added eight more rooms. The high school is consolidated with that of Rockingham, with trucks to take the children beyond the seventh grade into town. The school auditorium seems to be something of a community center.

15. In 1910 three neighboring mills on the edge of Shelby furnished a lot and built a school which the county operated, the mills supplementing the term to equal that of Shelby. Some years later the area was made a special tax district. The people were beginning to need a new school badly when this section was taken into the town limits in 1925, just in time to allow the town to build it. The town issued bonds for this and other schools and built a $75,000 grammar and junior high school for this section.

16. A very old rural mill occupies a part of a school district which is very proud of its long history in maintaining a good rural and later consolidated school. At present the county wishes to consolidate it further with one or the other of two nearby high schools. To this the village and the mill management as well as the country population are strenuously opposed because of their pride in their own school and the inconvenience that the change would cause them. "We have the oldest school. It is not our fault if the school authorities made the mistake of starting others too near us."

17. A company which operates two small country mills supplements the county salaries at both village schools. The high school students go to the consolidated school at a nearby village. They are supposedly required to pay tuition for two months because of the difference in the lengths of the county and consolidated district terms. In actual practice they have not been doing so because the high school needed the pupils to help make it a Grade A school. When it becomes necessary for them to pay, "this may affect attendance some and then we will have to make other arrangements." Last year (1925-26) the mill spent $800 in supplementing teachers' salaries. The manager said the mill would prefer to have a special tax district and be rid of the bother of helping to run the school; in that case the cost would have been $1100. He thinks that if the county provides the schoolhouse, as it does here, it is cheaper for the mills to supplement the terms; but that it is not cheaper if the mills have to invest money in a school building.

18. The chief relation of a large group of mills to the schools is through the president, who has been for many years a member of the school board. The assessed valuation of the company has been about one-half the total for the school district. The company has always been in favor of better schools. Several years ago its motives were somewhat questioned when there was a movement to put a business course in the grammar grades. The president of the company opposed it because he thought it unwise to give the students a smattering of business training before they had been better grounded in the fundamentals. He was able to cite cases in which the company had unsuccessfully tried to use young people trained in

that way. Later, when the high school had been considerably improved, a business course was introduced there. The president feels that public opinion has seen the wisdom of his stand.

As the foregoing discussion and especially these examples show, it is almost impossible to discuss the relation of the mills to schools in any ordered way because almost every one has worked out its local problems in a different fashion, and even its own method has varied as the years have passed. Even mills inside town limits have, as we have seen, found it desirable for one reason or another to aid schools. Of the 322 mills covered by this study, viewed not by groups as we have studied them but from the beginning of their existence, the record is as follows: One hundred and seventy-five, of which forty-nine are knitting mills, have never helped schools in any way because they have always been in town, county consolidated, special tax, or special charter school districts; twenty-five that are in town or such special districts have helped by building or by adding to teachers' salaries or in some like manner; 104 in county districts have assisted schools directly in one way or another. Some of this group have now become parts of town or consolidated districts and the necessity for aid no longer exists. There remain eighteen mills which were, and still are, parts of county systems and which have never given any aid so far as our information goes. In two or three cases an earlier management may have done so, but there is no one at present connected with the mills who knows definitely of such assistance, and they are therefore put in this group as being more likely to belong here than in any of the others. This group represents somewhat less than 6 per cent of the total number of mills concerned, and, since all except two are very small, it represents an even smaller percentage of the employees.

ATTITUDES OF MILL MANAGEMENTS TOWARD SCHOOLS

It hardly falls within the province of a study of this kind to inquire into the personal activities and interests of the mill executives as citizens of their communities. But casual references in interviews revealed the fact that in a great many cases—town, consolidated school district, and county alike—

some member of the mill executive group was on the school board. This is quite natural, since the mill executives are in most communities the leading, and in all communities among the leading, business men and citizens. A study of this unofficial representation of the mill in school affairs would no doubt reveal a consistent attitude of interest not unlike that shown by company aid. That it also allows great opportunities for control is of course as inevitable in the mill villages as it is in the farming districts, where the leading planters can dominate the school if they choose. These opportunities are the natural corollary to a system of the local control of schools. How they work out in actual practice is an interesting subject, the study of which would require observation of many mill communities over a long enough period to cover typical changes or crises in the school programs. Some general observations on this matter of control will be made in the chapter dealing with churches.

A study of the relation of the mills to education shows two significant facts. One of these is that the mills have demonstrated that they are interested in education not only by giving of their executives' time and influence as important citizens but even to the point of aiding financially where such aid is necessary. The foregoing figures and cases would surely seem conclusively to prove that interest.

But besides helping with school finances, it has often been necessary for the manager or superintendent or foreman to use his personal influence to get the children to go to, or to stay in school. In several instances mills insisted as a general policy that the children of the workers go to school; much more commonly the manager gave his personal advice to a boy or girl or urged an individual father and mother to send a child to school in the days when education was not popular or considered a necessity. We are now in the same stage with regard to high school attendance. In response to the question whether the mill boys and girls go on to high school the answer was, with very few exceptions, that they do not. And without any further question the men interviewed almost always added that the mill wanted them to and urged them to. In some cases this may have been lip service to what is known to be now a popular idea, but when they almost invariably mentioned in-

stances of their aiding boys and girls, of giving them part-time work so that they could afford to stay in school, of trying to impress upon a promising youth the importance of continuing, of urging an indifferent parent to keep his son or daughter in high school—of the hundred and one different sorts of personal problems relating to high school, with which they have interested themselves personally, one becomes convinced that they were not speaking entirely for effect.

The second significant fact is that so many of the schools which serve the mills have, during the entire history of the mills, been part of town, county consolidated, or special tax or special charter systems. The popular notion in North Carolina is that the typical mill is the country or suburban plant, that it runs the school or supplements the county term, and jealously guards these actions as privileges and pleasures, as means of saving money and of exercising control. Our cross-section study upsets some of these ideas. There have been more mills inside corporate limits than those of any other group, though the suburban mills are close to them in number, while the movement to enlarge town limits has now made the group inside such limits larger than all others combined. Of course, the number inside town school districts has always been greater than that within town limits, because such districts are usually larger than the town itself. Therefore in 1926, out of the 322 plants studied, 207 plants and villages were parts of town systems, and seventy-one were parts of county consolidated systems, leaving forty-four to be served by county graded schools. Of the county schools, the terms of twenty-eight are still supplemented by the mills, leaving sixteen schools attended by mill children which have only the county term.

The mills may be said at present, then, to be moving with the current of school development that is flowing through the state. There have been many instances in North Carolina in the past twenty years of vigorous and often successful attempts on the part of mills to prevent or at least postpone being taken into town limits. This opposition was mainly to town taxes for public improvements which the mill management thought would not be extended to the mill village, or which the mill could not afford. Sometimes this included an adequate school building for the use of the mill children.

Though the manner of gathering most of the information for this study was not well suited to discovering all cases of this kind, some of the comments made in interviews with mill men as well as with school officials would permit of this interpretation. A few cases have reached the stage of being aired in the local and state papers. There have even been a few outstanding examples of a desire on the part of mills to retain control of the local school after the area was taken into town limits. The prominence of these cases and the publicity surrounding them may be partly responsible for the general opinion that all mills oppose such consolidation with town and special tax districts. That they are exceptions, however, is suggested by the figures given in this chapter showing the tendency toward inclusion in town and consolidated districts. Willingly or not, the mills have fallen into line with the recent development in North Carolina toward larger schools serving more extended and varied areas. Indeed, Mr. John Sprunt Hill was able to cite, in a public address in 1924 at Atlanta, Georgia, a rather imposing list of cotton mill men who had "led fights in their respective districts for the imposition of local taxes upon themselves for the support of public schools and for the issuance of bonds for the erection of school buildings."

Opinions as to the relative costs of operating the schools by special tax or direct subsidy differ widely, and it is a difficult point upon which to secure exact figures because of the varying tax rates, because of the differences in ratio between assessed and real values, because often a mill will furnish coal and minor supplies, or help buy a piano, or build an annex—in short, because of the thousand and one variable factors that go to modify situations of this sort. Several executives who were interviewed said that by supplementing the county terms they could provide a school of a quality that would cost them less than the same school paid for by special tax. One or two of the men who said this are in districts which have recently changed over to the special tax system "because the people voted to," or "because everybody preferred that way." About an equal number, on the other hand, said that it was cheaper to pay the tax outright and not be bothered with the many details connected with running the

school. Besides, there is always some private property in the district—homes, farms, stores, and the like—that under taxation bears its proportion of the cost of the extended term, whereas under the supplementing system it pays none. County superintendents who were interviewed were also about equally divided on the point of cost, but all of them agreed that it was better to have the special tax and let the county run the school entirely. Each one pointed with some pride to the decrease in supplemented terms and the increase in special tax districts in his county in recent years and indicated that he was working to get all areas to come under the more democratic plan. The superintendent of public instruction of Gaston County has used every opportunity, such as the building of new schools, to set up special tax districts. For fifteen or twenty years this county has been building schools which serve mill villages by bond issues and has been paying for them with special taxes. Many mills started with such arrangements upon the building of the plant. Especially was this true of those mills built during and just after the World War. The state allowed high schools with an enrollment of twenty or more pupils to issue bonds. Elementary schools, therefore, had to grow into high schools before bonds could be issued. In these cases the mills lent the county school department the money, and later, when it became legally possible, the new school district issued bonds to repay it. "Part of the time," said Mr. Hall, the county superintendent, "I was building several schools, calling on the mills for a pro rata part each month as building operations went on, just as if I had been building a mill and calling on subscribers to the stock." There are only three mills in Gaston County that still use the method of supplementing the county term, and the superintendent hopes to change one of these soon to a special tax district.

As to ownership of the school building, the attitudes of the mills are a little less clear and understandable and are more variable. Many mills scattered over the state still own the schools built some years ago when they were supplementing terms. Some allow the use of such buildings rent free; others have begun to charge rent since a special tax has been in force. On the other hand, some mills turned their schoolhouses over to the county either upon completion or upon the creation

of a special tax district. Some have recently built costly buildings at their own expense, occasionally in special tax districts but more often not. The reasons given for these policies were almost as varied as the policies themselves. In two or three cases the mill owners erected the school because, owning almost all the property in the district, they preferred that the expense of the school should be met all at one time when they had the money rather than that it should be strung out over a period of years in the form of taxes. About an equal number said they preferred to accept no aid from the county because, according to law, if the county invested anything in the school the property would have to be deeded to the county. "We preferred not to have the county bothering," or they did not want any other owner in the midst of their property. These mills, in addition to the two or three that have been prominent in the papers in recent years as standing out for separate control, are the only ones that have shown any definite and open wish to manage the schools.

As far as the control of the teaching in the schools is concerned, there is little evidence of interference or control or any suggestion that it would be to the advantage of the mills to exercise such power even if they could or wanted to do so. Every school included in this study is a part of the public school system of the state, and, as such, follows the prescribed or suggested curriculum. So far, there has been too little development of manual arts or vocational training, except in a few of the bigger city systems, to allow the mills to show what their attitude would be in those fields. One large group of mills would like, by a gift of equipment, to encourage the local school—a special charter system—to teach some textile arts that would be useful to the boys and girls coming into their plants, which offer by far the best opportunities for work in the community. So far they have feared that public opinion would be critical and would accuse them of trying to use the public schools to train up workers for the mill. On the other hand, the county-supplemented systems at Proximity and Revolution and the special charter system at Roanoke Rapids have for many years taught manual arts—carpentry, woodworking, dressmaking, millinery, and domestic science.

Several men, in talking of the desirability of the children's

going on through high school, mentioned the fact that few who attend high school, and almost none who graduate, ever come back to the mills, though they may have come from mill families and have themselves worked during all vacations. Most of these executives seemed to take a rather resigned attitude on this point: that you could not expect them to, or that you often get them back in office work or as village teachers. In both of these positions, given the same ability, they are more valuable than people who have not had a long familiarity with mill backgrounds. Several, not quite so philosophical, talk about educating the people out of the mills and have something of a grievance because they consider that high school teachers consciously and deliberately do this in the case of the boys and girls who reach this stage. They feel convinced that the teachers constantly draw their pupils toward the professions and that very few of them either know or point out the opportunities in the textile field for the young man who is willing to fit himself for a good job. Hence, when the managers secure a young designer or technical man from the textile school they must expect to put him through a long, painful process of training in the application of his theoretical knowledge to the conditions of production—a process often highly discouraging to both sides—whereas if more of the mill boys became textile men instead of lawyers they would already know a great deal that the farmer's son educated for a textile career has to learn. One group of mills in the state, which still exercises considerable control over the schools, makes the one specification of its teachers that they shall not in any way disparage mill work.

As regards higher education, a few persons interviewed gave instances of aid to a promising boy or girl in going to college, in most cases the boys being those who planned to take textile or related courses. One man said that at the time he was interviewed there were four young people, three boys and one girl, from his village in college; he was helping all of them, three of them with loans. He added that he hoped the girl would come back to teach in the school and that one of the boys would take a textile course and return to them as a highly trained worker, doubly valuable because of his many school vacations spent in working in the mill. Such cases are on the

individual, personal basis found in so many of the mill employer-employee relations. They are not common enough to have caused the organized industry to form a definite policy regarding them, though the industry was favorable to the state-wide campaign for the expansion of institutions of higher education in 1920-21. Such problems of outside relations and policy of the industry as a whole are, as has been noted,[4] beyond the scope of this study of the internal mill village affairs.

There is still a widespread opinion in North Carolina that the schools serving the mill villages are inferior to others in length of term, in buildings, and in quality of teaching force. The figures collected in this study seem to disprove the first assumption. The second and third are not so easily proved or disproved by figures nor do they properly belong in the field of this study. Suffice it to say here that if the mill schools are inferior in these respects it is because public opinion in the towns concedes that less than the best is good enough for the mill children. Too many of the schools they attend are under regular town and special districts to make any other interpretation possible. And if the schools are inferior—and they probably are in many instances—public opinion, which often influenced the mill owner to build a little school years ago, which more recently influenced him to supplement the term, and more recently still brought him into a special tax district, is the only force that can raise the standard of buildings and teachers. For the school is now, for the most part, beyond the mill's direct control.

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[4]See Preface.

CHAPTER IV

THE MILLS AND NIGHT CLASSES

The work of the mills in promoting night classes is perhaps a more truly typical welfare activity than their aid of the regular schools. The latter was a more or less conventional form of work, one that soon became traditional, and one that, with the growing popularity of education in North Carolina, the more self-respecting companies found it desirable to have a part in if they wanted the esteem of the neighboring communities. And although it often happened that the president or treasurer of a company concerned himself with every sort of school problem, from the character of the teacher to the sort of blackboard required, it was nevertheless true, all of the time for some mills and part of the time for all mills, that aid and interest consisted merely in signing a check for additional funds.

Not so with the night school. It has been, and remains to a certain extent, a personal and individual service to his employees of the man who promotes it. Anyone who has ever had experience with volunteer study groups knows how much "whooping up" it takes to get them started and how much encouragement, genuine interest, follow-up work, and good teaching are needed to keep them going. Sometimes this work has been done by the chief acting executive of the company—president, secretary, or treasurer as the case might be. Sometimes it has been done by the superintendent or an overseer or by some man connected with mill or office to whom the appeal of the illiterate happened to come very strongly. Sometimes, particularly in the earlier years, a night class for boys and girls or for adults was the hobby of some citizen in an adjoining community or of an organization such as a woman's club or a church society. Such outsiders could always find a group, willing at least to start, in the mill village near by; apparently, too, they could always count on the coöperation of the management.

Night school work has shown a development similar in some respects to that of the regular schools in that it has gradually moved from a basis of personal interest and philanthropy toward public promotion and control, though personal interest still plays a large part in keeping classes interested. Night classes are somewhat different from the public schools in that the content of their teaching has considerably changed. From instruction chiefly in reading and writing, or at most in English and arithmetic, the typical night class has now turned to vocational, technical, and specialized subjects.

The history of night school work in mill villages in North Carolina divides itself naturally into three periods. The first is that of the occasional class promoted by anyone interested enough to gather its members and teach it—irregular in time and dispersed in space, for one mill seldom had classes continuously for very long, and efforts of this kind were widely scattered over different parts of the state. The period may be considered to extend up to about 1914, when the Moonlight School enthusiasm struck North Carolina. The Moonlight School period was short-lived and was superseded, upon the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act, by a movement for vocational education on a firmer basis, the state and federal governments furnishing three-fourths of the money and their agents doing a certain amount of work to promote classes and exercising a continuous and wholesome, if lenient, supervision.

FIRST PERIODS FROM THE BEGINNING TO 1914

If definite and reliable information on early relations to schools is difficult to secure it is much more so in the case of night classes. For the school was a continuous thing, it usually cost money, and if a new management took charge of the mill the officials would take pains to find out what the company's policy had formerly been. The night class during all this period was, on the other hand, spasmodic and occasional, a matter of purely personal interest on the part of some person directly or indirectly connected with the mill. Therefore, if there happened to be a change in the management it was far more likely that all recollection of a class would disappear gradually, as the students died or moved away. When such

situations were suspected during this study, if the man interviewed was not certain that there had been no night classes before his day, he was asked to suggest older residents of the village who might know. By this means several instances of early night classes were discovered. And so, though the account given here makes no claim to being exhaustive, it is believed that for the 322 mills covered it is at least fairly complete.

The earliest example of a night class found in this study was one at Spray, started about 1874. Mrs. L. H. Walker, daughter of the founder, Governor Morehead, and a large stockholder in the mills, moved to Spray that year and soon after opened a night class for girls working in the mills. Reading and writing were subjects taught. Some pupils, however, must have advanced beyond the beginners' stage, for Mrs. Walker continued the classes ten years, and since the mills and village were small and the workers less migratory than in some plants, many of them must have attended during several years. The classes met in Mrs. Walker's home. They were made up of groups of girls from near by, for the streets of the village were not well lighted, and "girls did not go about easily at night in those days."

Apparently the next night school in point of time was at Worthville in Randolph County. An old employee still living in the village told of attending a class the second year the mill was in operation, which was 1883. She said it was started and taught by the local school teacher at the request of some of the villagers. She did not know whether the mill paid the teacher extra for doing this or not. When she attended there were twenty-five or thirty pupils meeting in the basement of one of the dwellings in the village. The classes were intended only for pupils who were already literate. She and a man who has been continuously in the mill since 1881 said that these classes went on regularly during the first few years of the mill and then spasmodically for thirty years in all. There has been no night school for the last fifteen years, the latter supposed, "because with the better chance the children have had lately to go to school there is no longer the need and the demand for it."

Another way in which a night school might originate is

to be found in a third example. Early in the eighteen-nineties some members of the Baptist Church in Tarboro, to which the owner of the mill belonged, came out to the mill village to conduct night classes in primary subjects, meeting in the little chapel which the mill had built for a Sunday school. The teachers were mostly women, and the work was all a volunteer service, but it was followed with interest and encouragement by the owner of the mill. On account of subsequent changes in management it was difficult to find anyone who knew definitely about these classes, but it seems that attendance was at the time considered satisfactory and the whole venture successful.

Still a fourth plan was that undertaken in 1895 by the Washington Mills at Mayodan. These mills showed considerable interest in schools by building a schoolhouse and completely operating it for several years until the county took it over. During the same time it employed a night school teacher who taught classes of adults, having two groups that met on alternate nights. Attendance was good—some twenty-five to thirty in each class—and general primary and elementary subjects were taught. This company-paid teacher was continued long after the county took over the school, in fact until about ten years ago when "the night school just stopped" from general lack of interest.

Also in the nineties were held the night schools at Spencer Mountain in Gaston County. One of the executives living near this little country water power mill arranged that the day school teachers, who boarded in his home, should teach evening classes in elementary subjects for two or three years.

Although several of the night schools described above lasted either regularly or spasmodically over a long period, in only one instance have early classes continued, albeit in casual fashion, to the present. This is in the Rocky Mount Mills. Ever since 1890 there have been, off and on, night classes in that village. They were started sometimes by employees, sometimes by ladies of the nearby town, sometimes by a teacher of the village school. Usually such classes would run for two or three winters and then stop for a year or two until someone else started them again. The mills encouraged them by urging the people to attend and by other means, though the teach-

ing services were voluntary. The subjects taught were reading and writing and, later, general elementary branches. At this mill the early classes merged into the Moonlight School and then into vocational classes.

One of the most interesting of these earlier classes was that of the Erwin Mills in West Durham. Mr. Erwin became personally interested in doing something for the large number of people in the mills who could not read and write. In 1899 he called a meeting of all the illiterates and told them he was going to give them the opportunity to learn to read and write if they wanted it. He hired the best teachers in the regular day school, teachers who had vision enough to see the value of even an elementary education and who wanted to help. The school ran for eleven weeks, and of those who attended, nearly all, some forty or fifty men and women, learned to read and write. Mr. Erwin still treasures a large sheaf of letters written to him by members of the class thanking him for their schooling; he can tell some personal detail about every writer as he goes through the collection.

A still different sort of attempt was made in night schools in the early years of the century through the efforts of Mr. Gore of Great Falls Mills at Rockingham. He considered that since the mills were, and had long been, within town limits and were thus a contributor to school taxes it would be proper for the town school system to have night classes for those who had had no chance to go to school when younger. As a member of the school board he interested the other members in the plan to the extent of paying the teachers for their services. The night school was held at the grammar school building not far from the mill village. It had four grades and some sixty students. It seems to have run for only one winter. Later, Moonlight Schools were held there.

One other mill had a night school in the eighties and three more early in the next decade. Of the first nothing more could be learned; in the other cases the classes were started and taught by community or welfare workers employed by the mills for all sorts of activities.

These twelve night schools are the only early ones discovered in this study. Though no claim is made to exactness, the list is believed to be very nearly complete. All the mills did not

invest money in this work, but in every case they encouraged it by giving their moral support, by furnishing a building, by paying for fuel and light, or by aiding in some other concrete way.

Besides these scattered cases of temporary classes or night schools started before 1914 there has been one other notable example which shows a more continuous history and probably points the direction in which several other adult education programs will later develop. It was not strictly an "early" case, but since it was launched before 1914 its history may perhaps best be related here. Mr. Julian S. Carr, Jr., active head of the Durham Hosiery Mills, became interested in the idea of night classes for his employees, and in April, 1912, employed Mrs. J. A. Robinson, a teacher in the public schools, to teach such a class. An informal canvass of the employees seems to have been made, and those interested promised, in return for free tuition, books, and supplies, to attend regularly and put their best effort into the work. The class met twice a week through April and May. It was so popular that it continued throughout the summer. After that it usually ran for several months each fall and again following the coldest weather of the winter. A few pupils dropped out but more new ones joined, so that the class increased from twenty-six pupils to about fifty, ranging in age from fourteen to sixty-five years. The teacher reported absentees to the foreman, who investigated them. If a pupil was absent often without good reason, he was reminded that his opportunity and his books could be used more advantageously by other employees waiting to join the class. The mill gave prizes for attendance and when possible promoted night school pupils as an object lesson. For two or three years the class met over the machine shop in the mill. The original plan had been to teach only beginners and to take them through the third grade until they could write a simple letter and read the Bible and the newspaper. But many wanted to go further.

After two or three years the superintendent of schools became interested and secured the coöperation of fraternal orders and other organizations to pay the salaries of two additional teachers besides the one paid by the mills. The classes were then held in the Edgemont Grammar School, and pupils

from that whole section of town came in. After two more years the school board took over the night school, which kept increasing in number of teachers and pupils. Some of the latter who had started as beginners continued through the seventh grade. Attendance was probably maintained better than in the public schools at this time—unexcused absences were checked, three of which resulted in the dropping of the offending pupil. This night school was the nucleus of the present elaborate day-trade classes for high school students and of the vocational education classes carried on in connection with the Durham city schools. Mrs. Robinson said that there were many earnest men among the early pupils. She was able to recall some six or eight who had afterwards had considerable success in the mill and in other lines of work. After the school was placed under the school board, Mr. Carr continued to furnish books for his employees. In 1915 Mr. Carr arranged that Mrs. Robinson start a night class at the company's plant in Carrboro. She organized it and turned it over to a local minister to teach. It was not successful there and was held for only a short time. This was due, she thought, to the fact that absences were not reported to the mill and to the lack of any arrangement for the coöperation of the foreman.

SECOND PERIOD: 1914 TO 1918

Night classes in mill villages received some impetus at the time of the Moonlight School enthusiasm in North Carolina. Starting in Kentucky in 1911, where it remained for several years a local experiment with the problem of illiteracy, this movement had, by the fall of 1914, reached several other states including North Carolina. In July, 1915, the state superintendent of public instruction, Mr. J. Y. Joyner, stated that there had been eighty-two Moonlight Schools in twenty-nine counties enrolling 1600 illiterates averaging forty-five years of age, most of whom had learned to read and write. Seven thousand North Carolina teachers volunteered for service the next year, though of course by no means all of these actually taught classes. There seem to have been seven or eight hundred classes for illiterates with nearly ten thousand enrolled. In 1917 the legislature appropriated $25,000 for Moonlight Schools and

in 1919 made them a part of the school system of the state,[1] which they continued to be until 1922.

The movement was to a large degree a rural one, but it would of course reach the mill villages as well, especially since there were so many illiterates there. Most of these Moonlight Schools were fostered by the teachers or principals of the public schools, usually with the encouragement, or at least the knowledge, of the mills. If classes were not held in the school building the mill was usually called upon to allow the use of a room in the office, some other building, or a tenement. Or it might be asked to wire the village schoolhouse and furnish lights so that the classes could be held at night. But all in all, the relation of the mills to Moonlight Schools was rather slight, and hence that activity is not remembered very well. For instance, of the three hundred-odd mills studied only eighteen mentioned Moonlight Schools. Several of these schools were in towns in which the classes serving several mills were promoted and held at the regular school, so that the eighteen plants were served by only thirteen different Moonlight Schools. In view of the wide enthusiasm on the subject all over the state it is very likely that more than eighteen mills out of the three hundred were reached by these classes; but it is equally likely that if other mills had given them any substantial aid the fact would have been remembered.

A few summaries of the mills' experiences with these classes may be of interest here. One large mill, used to carrying things through with enthusiasm, started its first year's experiment of the Moonlight Schools with hundreds of pupils, but the number soon dropped to two or three. A small mill had three classes, and though no record of the number of pupils was available, it had evidently been a source of some interest and comment that the classes had included twelve men over forty years of age. Another small mill tried classes for two years, 1916 and 1917, but interest in them did not last; indeed there never was very much interest. Yet the superintendent remembered two valuable men who had learned to read and write in these classes, one of them a foreman whom heretofore they had

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[1]C. W. Stewart, *Moonlight Schools for the Emancipation of Adult Illiterates* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1922), pp. 125–128.

always had to provide with a clerk to keep his records. In still another, a small mill in the midst of a town, some ladies of the churches, moved no doubt by the Moonlight School enthusiasm, decided to do some night school work in the village—"some people want to improve the other fellow when often they need it just as badly themselves in other ways," was the accompanying comment—and they held elementary classes for three winters in the village chapel. Here too, it was impossible to learn the number of pupils who attended the classes, but the promoters were said to have been quite satisfied with the response to their efforts.

Four mills during this period had elementary classes carried on by their welfare workers. A group of eight or ten in one town had classes promoted by the industrial Y.M.C.A. secretaries, who were the official welfare workers for the mills. Another, a small country mill, much interested in community education and welfare projects, was instrumental in getting a Moonlight School started. In two others the county school officials and local teachers started them, and in nine cases the town school authorities were the promoters, the classes serving some sixteen mills covered by this study as well as others not included. Thus it would appear from all available information that some thirty or thirty-five mill villages had the advantages of night schools during part or all of this period. Many classes lasted only one year, with a session of from ten to twenty weeks; others met one or two nights a week through several winters. Very few of them were directly promoted by executives of the mills. This number is surprisingly small when we consider the popularity of the Moonlight School. It is, however, very much larger than that of the older type of night school, for, as we have seen, there were only some eighteen of the latter discoverable between 1874 and 1914. The trend is similar to that in the public school field, namely, toward promotion by public or community agencies rather than by mill executives, employees, or a member of the manager's family. The next period in the development of night schools added the factor of public financial aid and public supervision to a new kind of night school—one that trained for the job.

THIRD PERIOD: 1918 TO 1926

In 1918, when the popularity of Moonlight Schools was waning, High Falls, a small country mill in Moore County, had classes started by the foremen. They thought that it would help the younger men in the village to hold some classes in spelling and other common branches and in mill arithmetic. They interested the men in it and organized and taught the classes. These classes were considered to have done much good, and several men were helped considerably by them. "Most of the fixers or mechanics knew how to make the regular changes in the machine adjustments from practice and observation but they couldn't work out a new one, and so this arithmetic especially was a big help." Thus this small, isolated mill was working out for itself a solution of its needs. It was a coincidence that this was exactly the solution that the federal and state governments were working out that very same year under the Smith-Hughes Act for Vocational Education.

This act was passed in 1917, and the first classes in North Carolina under its provisions were held in the winter of 1918–19. The general plan includes three types of work: night classes in subjects relating to the daily work and possible future advancement of the students; day-trade schools usually attached to the high schools; and part-time trade-preparatory or general continuation schools for employed boys and girls, teaching general subjects. All of these are financed jointly, the federal government paying one-half the salary of the teacher, the state one-fourth, and some local agency the remaining one-fourth and providing the meeting place and necessary equipment. Of these various types the night class in vocational subjects has been by far the most common. It is easiest to start, as many have already realized the need for training; it is most obviously and directly beneficial; it is relatively easy to provide with capable teachers from among the superintendents and foremen; it requires little equipment and no inconvenience to the working hours of the mill. The International Correspondence Schools had for many years been selling courses to men in the mills. Accordingly, when the vocational supervisors made arrangements with that institution to use its texts this fact gave the night classes a standing

among the overseers, who were best able to recommend them to the young men wishing to prepare for promotion. The local one-fourth of the money for teachers' salaries and the equipment have almost invariably been provided by the mills, though with the establishment in recent years of classes at the schools serving the several mills in a town, the public school system is beginning to furnish this part of the funds. Welfare workers or school principals may be instrumental in starting a class, though in a large majority of cases this has been done by someone connected with the mill management. Any person or mill showing interest receives advice and assistance from field workers of the State Department of Public Instruction in getting started, in training night school teachers, and in helpful, experienced supervision throughout the usual ten weeks' term.

Fortunately, it is possible to secure much more accurate information regarding these night classes than any of the earlier kind: they are more recent; more of them were started or sponsored by some mill executive; they came to the attention of several responsible persons in the process of being authorized and in part paid for. And besides we have the official reports of the supervisor of vocational education with which to check the recollection of the local men.

In 1918–19 there were five textile classes serving seven mills, two of the classes each having students from two mills and being paid for by the two. The following table briefly summarizes the numerical progress of the classes:

Year	No. Textile Classes	No. Mills Served	No. Mills Served Included in This Study
1918–19	5	7	4
1919–20	56	31	27
1920–21	125	74	54
1921–22	156	71	54
1922–23	136	67	56
1923–24	125	62	52
1924–25	138	74	62
1925–26	109*	7	64
1926–27	130		

*The decrease was due to a smaller appropriation for this purpose on the part of the state, which automatically reduced the federal money available.

The subjects increased in variety almost as much as the number of classes. Mill arithmetic was the only subject taught the first year and remains the most frequent through all the years, with mill calculations a close second. A list of others will serve to show the variety of subjects: loom fixing, carding, designing, cloth calculations, bleaching and dyeing, spinning calculations, looping, weaving, yarn calculations, draft calculations, mechanical calculations, silk, wool, and rayon manufacturing, foremen training, and industrial economics.

In many instances classes were held for only a year or two, though there are some mills and towns which have now had classes long enough for them to be considered almost an institution. The following table indicates the number of years in which classes have been held at the various mills. These classes were not always held in consecutive years. In 56 cases of the 153 they were held in successive years, most of these being among the large mills or groups of mills. The reasons for this are simple: only the larger organizations are able to find men enough each year who are interested in the classes; the large mills furnish the opportunity for promotion often enough to keep younger men anxious to prepare for it; and they usually have some staff officer or welfare or community worker to whom such work is turned over as a part of his general job.

Number of Years in Which Vocational Classes Have Been Held in Mills of North Carolina

	No. Plants	No. Held Consecutive Years	Mills in First Column Included in This Study
1 year	43		26
2 years	40	10	22
3 "	14	7	11
4 "	16	5	10
5 "	9	4	6
6 "	13	13	12
7 "	18	17	17
	153	56	104

In these vocational night classes there are suggestions of a movement toward the regular schools. It is so new that it probably should not be called a distinct trend as yet, but taken

with the other indications of the extension of public functions in the mill village it is significant enough to require notice. For while in 1922 there was but one textile night class fostered and financed by a high school which served the employees of several mills, in 1926 there were seven towns having such classes which served eighteen mills. Of course it is unlikely that this movement will extend to one-mill towns, but it does seem the logical step for mills in the same town to take, particularly if they are too small to have enough students for classes at each mill. The experience with school authorities has been varied. On the one hand, the superintendent of a mill belonging to a large group initiated vocational classes, pushed them for two years, and then turned them over to the school principal, who "fell down on the job." A town near by, on the other hand, has long conducted vocational night classes in the school, and the school superintendent said that if announcements of the classes are not made soon after regular term opens in the fall, people begin asking him about them. In addition there is, of course, the experience of the Durham Hosiery Mills, related above, in which the night classes started by the mills were taken over by the school and have become a vital part of the school system.

ATTITUDE TOWARD NIGHT SCHOOLS

So much for the extent and nature of the night classes. The opinions about them are as varied as the classes. In some places they are spoken of with enthusiasm, in others with indifference, and in still others with distinct coolness. Two or three of the larger groups of mills consider that vocational night classes are of real service to the employees and a big benefit to the mills in turning out better trained workers, particularly for positions in which training counts heavily, namely, those of minor production executives. They also consider the classes of value in creating increased loyalty to the company which has thus provided opportunity for advancement. To the impartial observer this relation between promotion and night classes may be cause and may equally well be effect. It may be that the company has a policy of promoting its own men and that this training better fits them for advancement. But con-

versely, the fact that the men are ambitious and eager enough to be studying is, no doubt, the means of calling attention to them when promotions are possible. It must be admitted that in an industry so completely supervised by men from the ranks as are the cotton mills of North Carolina and the South, it is still very common for the plant in need of a foreman or a superintendent to advertise or look about in other mills rather than among its own force. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the vocational classes are in many instances performing a real service to the morale of the force, and ultimately to that of the entire industry, by thus leading to a policy of promotion inside a plant. This is a service quite as real, if less tangible, than that of the actual training given. Many executives, when asked about their vocational classes, mentioned voluntarily the number of night school pupils who had been advanced and state that their policy is to consider all night school men first when a vacancy arises.

On the other hand, at several mills there was a distinct feeling that the promotion motif had been somewhat overworked. As a result, it was said, men had been imbued with a somewhat more than healthy discontent, since higher jobs did not materialize as fast as the pupils thought they were ready for them. Several executives had rather mixed feelings on the subject of such classes because some of their best men had been promoted out of the company, securing better jobs in other mills than their own was able to offer them. One medium-sized mill that had had night classes for only a year or so complained that of thirteen men who had attended them eight had left the company because they were disappointed in not being promoted right away. Openings simply did not occur fast enough. Naturally, interest on the part of both men and management declined in that mill.

An executive whose business it is to promote vocational education in another mill, a large concern, and who had had somewhat the same experience, was, however, still unqualifiedly in favor of the classes. He realized that he could not keep all the men under any conditions, and that the more trained men there are in the state the more apt he is to get some who have been trained elsewhere, even though he lose some who got their training in his classes. He took the broad point of view that after

all the mill is putting only one-fourth of the money into the program while the state and federal governments are putting in three-fourths, so that no mill management should feel that it ought to be able to keep every man it trains.

Vocational classes, and any other night classes for that matter, have many ups and downs. An epidemic of influenza or even a revival meeting has so disturbed attendance as completely to wreck a class; those in large towns have more or less difficulty competing with the attractions of movies and lodges. One or two mills so located have resorted to the plan of selecting the men qualified to get most out of the classes and inviting them to join. What such a plan loses in democracy and in the calling out of personal ambition and initiative, it makes up in increased interest due to the feeling of the men that they are members of a picked group. The writer knows of one set of classes which were almost wrecked on the rocks of promotion. Shortly after the first ten weeks' course was over two of the men in a class received promotion, one being of some consequence. After Christmas there was a rush of students, new classes were formed, and great interest was manifested. But since theirs was only a medium-sized plant with correspondingly few opportunities, and since it did not have a very well-established policy of promoting its own men, none of the new devotees was advanced at once. The next year considerable effort was needed to enroll enough men for a single class.

Moreover, a vocational class can be easily ruined by having a teacher who does not know mill conditions well enough to command the respect of the men in their own field as well as in the subject he teaches. Another vulnerable point lies in the fact that the teaching process in such a class is not like that of ordinary schools. It must be highly individual, and it must be suited to adult minds, which are, however, ill equipped for working at intellectual tasks. For this reason regular school teachers have often failed to hold a class, while a foreman or superintendent who has come up the line himself has succeeded admirably.

The fact that foremen and superintendents can be secured to teach these trade subjects to the men in the ranks is significant of a great change that has come about in the attitude of boss to worker. Many foremen and superintendents have

commented to the writer on this change, declaring that when they were learning a trade the men above them were jealous lest the younger workers take their jobs away from them. They considered all their knowledge a personal and trade secret. One mill superintendent of about fifty years of age, in a talk at a night school commencement, congratulated the pupils on their opportunity for study and free instruction by practical men. He said that when he was growing up in the mill he and all others had to "steal the knowledge." As a sweeper boy he used to see the boss figure changes in the settings of the machines, watch where he threw the crumpled paper, quietly rescue it, and work over it himself to see how the operation was done. Mill supervisors and mill executives all over the state have testified to the same feeling of jealousy. Sometimes and on some jobs a young hand could induce an experienced man to teach him his trade by paying the older worker a part of his wages over a long period.

The reasons for that attitude were simple and numerous. The overseer had had to acquire his knowledge by dint of costly and painful experience, and he could not be expected to be too generous in passing it on. He realized that he did not know too much himself and was afraid of competition. Besides, the idea was common that a man had to acquire such skill through long and toilsome practice and observation. The reasons for the change are equally numerous and obvious. There has been a growing interest and faith in education in general. Technically trained men who have taken an educational short cut to at least some things of practical value in running a mill or a department have begun to make their appearance in the industry. The war expansion created a demand for more men in supervisory positions and proved that the period of training could be much shortened even on the job. The trade associations have begun to hold many sectional meetings in which experience and technical practice are freely exchanged. Finally, the Vocational Education Act itself pointed out a need and furnished a means of meeting it. To all these factors must be added the stimulation of such work by the state supervisor, Mr. George W. Coggin. The mills in North Carolina have been fortunate in having so capable and enthusiastic a man who has held his present position long enough to familiarize himself with the

state and its industries and to have an entrée into so many plants. All in all, vocational night classes seem to have reached a rather sound and permanent basis in North Carolina mills. Their more recent development is toward a greater variety of courses and more advanced studies. This is only natural as more and more of the young men complete the basic courses of mill arithmetic and mill calculations. The subjects will probably continue to be more diversified as the industry increases in complexity and as competition increases, making skill in all stages of management more important.

Two other types of educational work promoted by the Vocational Education Department have had only a few trials in the mills of the state. One of these is the foremen's training class in which a group of overseers, with a chairman skilled in leading discussion, exchange experiences and work out better methods of carrying on their job. The emphasis is placed on the human side and on employee relations. It is not surprising that this type of class has not developed much; the cotton mills are still using a line organization with little direct interrelation of overseers, all matters touching two or more going through the superintendent. Besides this, the relation of employee to company has been, and still remains, very largely a matter of individual contact between the man and his employer. Personnel departments or any machinery for dealing with such matters as many industries do, are completely unknown in North Carolina mills. Personnel activities, as the term is understood in the many books on the subject, are an undeveloped field, and until they receive more formal attention foremen's training classes will probably not develop much.

The other type of class which has had few trials is the part-time general continuation school. Such a school, teaching all branches of grade school or high school work, is for employed boys and girls between fourteen and sixteen. The framers of the Smith-Hughes Act probably expected that the school would be open continuously on working days with relays of pupils coming at various hours for two or three lessons. The difficulty is that such a system necessitates continual shifting of workers in the mill in order to keep the machines going. It is doubly hard in a cotton mill because the boys and girls are mostly employed in the spinning room, where a worker tends

one side of half a dozen or a dozen machines. In order for him to be absent at a class for two hours, four or five shiftings of workers must often be made to keep his "set" of machines tended so that all the machines and the other workers may proceed. The situation is complicated by the fact that some workers can tend more machines than others, and that the exigencies of production may require variations from day to day in the number of machines run, in the sizes of yarn, colors, warp, or filling yarn, all of which cause still more differences in the number of machines a person can run.

Of course such difficulties as these had to be surmounted during the period when test cases of the federal laws on child labor were pending in the courts, but as soon as the decision was handed down and the children could work full hours the foremen naturally felt relieved from a considerable nuisance. It was about this time that the Vocational Education Department of the state became ready to promote general continuation schools. It was obviously an impossible time to secure whole-hearted coöperation at the point where antagonism would have been greatest—among the immediate supervisors of the boys and girls. One or two beginnings have been made where mills have been on short time for lack of work or lack of power growing out of water shortage for hydro-electric current. One group of five or six mills, in coöperation with the Vocational Education Department, offered their boys and girls the opportunity of attending school for two days a week. It was possible to secure as instructors two young married women who had been unusually able teachers and who, now unable to teach full time, were glad to have a part-time job and were particularly interested in such an experiment. Able teachers, interested pupils, individual instruction, and a special effort to relate the studies to their work and their needs made the school so popular that the children voted to come for a half a day on Saturdays. It stopped when full-time work was resumed but has run twice since when the mills were on short time. It was popular with parents as well, and some even remarked: "Of course we hate to see short time, but at least the children get some good out of it." As soon as a notice of short time is posted in these mills children and parents alike begin inquiring whether school will start. This is a field in which much

more can be done, as there is so much irregularity in the operation of the mills.

It is quite possible that the increase of interest in vocational night classes and other educational efforts for workers has stimulated interest in classes for illiterates and others whose school opportunities have been small or poorly used. At any rate there are quite as many such classes in this most recent period as in earlier years, though with the increase in school facilities the need for them should be less pressing. Two large groups of mills that have a number of vocational classes each year always include some for illiterates. One group of mills in 1924, after having depended for several years on announcements, notices, and recommendations by foremen to enlist pupils for these classes, decided to go about it in a somewhat more thorough way. This group of mills has a fairly detailed personnel record of each employee giving, among other things, his educational attainments. After a careful study of these records some sixty men were talked to personally and invited to attend; some thirty agreed to do so, and over twenty attended for the two sessions of ten weeks each. So much interest was aroused that a number of the young men and women who had stopped school between the fourth and sixth grades asked for classes to suit their needs. The decision of the management was against supplying them, since these younger people had all had much more opportunity than the older group, and since the company was already paying the entire cost of the beginners' classes.

This sort of problem for beginners and more advanced pupils alike is being solved in many towns by night classes in general subjects run by the schools, just as we have seen they are beginning to conduct the vocational classes. In nine towns such classes were held, serving twenty-eight mills included in this study as well as some not included. One of them is fostered by a woman's club though run by the school; each mill pays a part of the cost based on the number of its employees who attend. Another such beginners' class is taught by a student in the college which is located on the other side of the same town. The history of one of these night schools is interesting. In 1921 at the request of some employees the mill secured the services of two of the town school teachers and started classes. The pupils

agreed to pay the teachers themselves, the cost amounting to about fifty cents a week per pupil. Other people in the community began to ask to be allowed to attend. Then the mill pointed out to the school board that as it had for many years been one of the largest taxpayers of the town it would be appropriate for the town to provide this instruction free. The board agreed and since then has provided two teachers for grade work on three nights a week during a six months' term. The mill superintendent has been not a little chagrined to find that fewer attend than when they paid fifty cents a week—about fifteen or eighteen instead of thirty-five or forty. Since this is a mill employing only about a hundred and fifty workers even the smaller number is encouraging, but the psychology of the situation is rather significant.

Besides those connected directly or indirectly with schools there are a number of mills where the welfare or community workers conduct classes for beginners as the demand arises or as the spirit moves them. Six mills reported such classes specifically, and there must be more since the mill executive, the main source of information about welfare work, often does not know in detail about the activities of his community worker. The wife of one superintendent teaches classes in English. At one small mill the nurse forms classes of some twenty-five pupils and teaches them until interest dies out and attendance declines to ten or twelve. She then stops until everybody has rested up and repeats the performance, sometimes having a series of three or four classes in a year.

CONCLUSION

A survey of the experience of the mills with night classes shows several significant lines of development. First, from being very rare and exceptional they have become quite common, especially in large mills and mill towns. A considerable proportion of the mill workers now have these advantages. Secondly, they are gradually changing in nature. The decline in the need of classes for illiterates should continue with great rapidity in the next few years. The increase in the need for vocational and technical training has really just begun. The chief question is whether the night schools can keep up with

the demand and the need in number of classes, and in quality and variety of training. Thirdly, they are rapidly becoming a public function. The fact that public money, official initiative, and expert supervision are being put into the night schools is going far to meet the future needs of number, quality, and variety. A great deal still depends on the mill managements for initiative in securing these public facilities, for encouraging the men to use them, and for adopting policies of promotion that will make attendance and study worth while.

CHAPTER V

THE MILLS AND THE CHURCHES

Our study of the relation of the mills to schools has shown that generalization concerning that branch of extra-mill activities is difficult, if not well-nigh impossible. A survey of aid to, and activities connected with, the churches should convince us of the same fact in this phase of mill relation to village life. Indeed, we should have to make a detailed case study of most of the mills with which we are concerned if we would arrive at any complete idea of these latter relations.

The aid given to churches varies widely in nature and amount. The mill may give the electric current necessary for lighting a small building for a short evening service twice a week, it may pay practically all the pastor's salary, or it may render any assistance between these extremes. The mill may turn over an unused one-room schoolhouse to the use of a congregation; it may build a hundred thousand dollar church as a memorial to the late president of the company. Most cases fall somewhere between these examples. A mill village church may know that it can count on the management to supply a parsonage rent free or a percentage of the running expenses, or to pay for a specific share of repairs, additions, and new building projects—any one or all of these. It is just as common for the church to make a special request upon each occasion of need. The aid may take the form of supplying a worker who devotes all his or her time to religious work, promoting Sunday school affairs and acting almost as a pastor's assistant. Or this leadership may be supplied by the mill executive himself acting as superintendent of the Sunday school and as leading member of the church. At the other extrème is the mill and village where the management knows nothing of the church life of the workers and gives no aid to its promotion. With the increase in the number of mills within town limits and near town churches, it is becoming increasingly common

for the mills to have little or nothing to do with churches and Sunday schools.

Not only does aid to churches vary thus in nature and amount from mill to mill, but it is highly variable in the same mill village from time to time. A change in management, a new superintendent, a more or a less vigorous pastor, or a dozen other factors may cause a change of policy toward the church or churches serving the employees. Some mills have an unbroken history of assistance from their beginning; others have given aid for only a few years in a life of thirty or forty years. Some executives have their policy well worked out and thoroughly understood by the churches; others take an equal pride in dealing with each case on its merits as it comes up. This difference in policy is paralleled by a difference in opinion regarding aid to churches. One mill executive says with satisfaction that the company will always help any church that starts, or wishes to start, in the village; another feels that there are too many in the village, but will give aid even to a new one if its representatives come to him and ask for it; a third discourages the split-off faction of an old church from erecting a new building; while a fourth, the head of a mill which does welfare, health, and educational work, throws up his hands and declares that he never has any dealings with the churches—"just as soon as you do, you get in trouble!"

And yet in spite of all these various experiences, policies, and attitudes there is one generalization that can be made: aid to churches and Sunday schools is the most widespread and most common outside activity carried on by the mills in North Carolina. That the principle of church assistance has had so many variations in kind and amount at different times and in different mills is proof of its adaptability to circumstances.

The reasons for such well-nigh universal attention to the religious life of the mill village are numerous. The hold of the church on community life in the South and in North Carolina is still very strong and was even stronger when most of the mills were built. It is strong among the class from which the employers come but even more so in the mountain and rural sections and in the smaller towns from which most of the employees come. Both parties have therefore a very definite

conviction as to the value of church and Sunday school to community life. And even if he had not been so thoroughly convinced of its value to himself and others, the employer had a further reason for promoting some sort of church work. The people of his own class in the town expected him to do something of the kind as a species of home missionary work, and the town churches often helped him with it. His employees, a group of people of small means, expected him to assist, just as the ordinary village or country church expects the leading and wealthiest citizen to do more for it than most others do. And finally, the orderliness of a village in which the churches were active and the higher class of people it would attract were sufficient to make it worth his while to aid churches as a part of his labor policy.

For all these reasons the custom started when the mills started and grew with the industry until it has become well-nigh universal in North Carolina. Not many hosiery mills aid churches—they are usually small and situated in the midst of a town—and some others are getting away from the policy. It is highly significant, however, that of all the executives interviewed for this study, when asked about their relation to and aid of churches, only five, representing eight plants, stated that it was their policy *not* to aid churches in any way. Two of these, representing four plants, were serving under Northern managements, and one of the others later remembered that the mill did give aid toward running expenses. This is not only the most common form of welfare activity or outside work, but it is the most favorably regarded by all classes concerned and the one that has been carried on the longest.

The material on this subject is so varied that it lends itself poorly to any summary. It is especially difficult to find any features in the work that are distinctive of various times. Hence it has seemed more profitable to discuss this phase of welfare work topically instead of by periods.

THE BUILDING OF MILL VILLAGE CHURCHES

Even in the building of the churches there have been so many varieties of procedure that it is scarcely possible to classify them accurately; and the same mill has often aided in

as many different ways as there have been churches built in the village. The three most common methods are: the entire cost is borne by the mill; aid of all degrees is given to the church in its building program; and finally the construction of mission chapels built by churches of the adjoining town is often aided by the mill. A continuation of the first and second methods appears in memorial churches which are either entirely or mainly built by the mill owners or chief stockholders and which, while formally not gifts of the mill, are virtually so.

Of the mills included in this study, sixty have at some time supplied the house for church or Sunday school. Of these, forty-three built churches, four as memorials and two as philanthropies of the owners, but in all six cases the owner was practically the company. Besides the forty-three, one other mill bought a mission chapel built by a town church, one turned over a tenement house to the church until it was able to build, and a third allowed the community house to be used by the church. The remaining fourteen of the sixty have allowed the church to use for varying lengths of time a schoolhouse built by the mill. The recent school consolidation movement and the extension of town limits, with consequent larger attendance at town schools, have meant that some buildings formerly used for both school and church are now turned over to church use exclusively. The churches built range all the way from tiny frame buildings smaller than many a country church to imposing brick structures that would do credit to a congregation in a town of 50,000 people. Most of them, of course, fall between these extremes. Only the more recent ones remain as originally built. Some have been entirely replaced; others have had additions and enlargements, especially in the form of Sunday school rooms.

Much more common is the second method of building—a certain percentage of the cost being given by the mill company. Ten of the sixty mills that constructed at least one church entirely, belong also in this group. There are eighty-nine other plants, making a total of ninety-nine. It is difficult to classify these with any real accuracy. Roughly, it appears that six gave the land only, thirty-three gave the land and helped with the building, and sixty provided various proportions of the money for the building without giving the land.

On this last point, however, the information is probably not very accurate. Often the executive interviewed merely mentioned the fact that the mill aided in the building of the church without specifying that it also gave the land; but the location of the church in many cases indicates that the land also was given. For most mills own a more or less solid block of land on which the village is situated, and they seldom sell any. A few executives, in telling of the changes that have come to the village churches, mentioned the giving of a deed to a church for the land; others indicated that the lot was simply turned over to the church as long as it was used for religious purposes, after which it reverted to the company. It is probable that most churches which are built well inside the mill villages are of the latter class.

The mission chapel built by a town church and aided by a mill occurs more rarely than any of the other general types of church building. Such chapels were found in eleven towns and served, or still serve, eighteen plants. In two cases the mill built the chapel and in one allowed the use of a community building for mission purposes, but in the remaining cases the town churches built the chapels for their own work. In a few instances it was the church in which the mill owner held membership that started this work, and there are indications that he helped considerably with it and may have initiated it. Sometimes these chapels were built by the predominating denomination. The most frequent denomination, however, has been the Episcopal. A number of former Episcopal missions have developed into independent churches or have given way before some other denomination. Often these Episcopal missions have supplied a visitor or nurse or social worker of some sort; but this form of activity can best be discussed under the general topic of welfare work.

In twenty-two cases mention was made of mill assistance in enlargements and additions to the church building; in seven mills, aid for repair of the church building was specifically mentioned. This latter form of aid is doubtless furnished a good deal more frequently, since the procedure is often to send the mill force of carpenters and repair men for minor repairs, as is done for other houses in the village.

AID IN RUNNING EXPENSES

While aid in building is perhaps given in a greater number of cases, it is likely that in the long run, and in most cases, more money is expended in paying a portion of the running expenses. There are seventy-eight plants which aid churches regularly, the help ranging from supplying the lights and fuel to paying most of the pastor's salary. Twenty-two others aid in the running expenses irregularly, "when they need help" or "when they come around," often to complete the amount necessary for the pastor's salary at the end of the year, or on some special occasion such as Christmas treats or summer picnics or when for one reason or another the treasury faces a deficit. There are other mills whose executives give aid regularly or irregularly as a more or less personal contribution, though in most of them the executive is the largest stockholder, and both he and the church consider it virtually aid from the mill company. There are a few cases in which a plant furnishes aid in more than one of these ways. Such overlappings have been omitted in the above figures, but in all there are 126 cases of aid toward running expenses. Many more mills help both with building and with running expenses than give several types of aid to running expenses alone.

Altogether there are only twenty-one cotton mills that, according to the best knowledge of their present executives, have not helped to build one or more churches or helped to support them more or less systematically. Thirty-eight hosiery mills and five specialty textile plants have not aided churches in any way.

Perhaps a more complete idea of the relations of mills to churches can be gained by a brief recital of the individual history of certain plants and towns. In Gastonia several mills have usually coöperated in the building and supporting of churches. In Charlotte a mill, built in a settled section of the city where there were already several churches, bought a church building from one congregation, paying a good price for it with the understanding that the money would be used to build a new and better edifice made necessary by the presence of the mill employees. Here the employees are rather scattered in their attendance on the several churches in the vicinity of

the mill. The mill each year "helps every church that many of its employees go to."

One executive said that since 1905 it had been the mill's policy to give 20 per cent of the cost of all new church buildings and additions in the village. Last year it gave $500 to one church, which was 20 per cent of the cost of an addition then being made, "but that was all they asked for." The executive of another mill that had built a church outright in its early days said that the management had decided to give only half the cost of all future buildings, because they believed the people valued a church more when they found themselves compelled to contribute something toward its erection.

The Hart Mill at Tarboro has had a varied experience with chapels, missions, and their buildings. The company built a small chapel about the time the first plant was started, in 1888, which was abandoned after three or four years because the people of the village would not support it. Some time later the Episcopal church of Tarboro built a mission chapel which they still maintain near the mill property for the employees. About twenty years ago the Methodists built a chapel, also off the mill property but near by, and also for the workers. They ran it for several years, but it was not considered a success and so they abandoned the work. Some eight years ago the mill bought the building from the Methodists for use as a band hall and for meetings. Finally some of the people of the village asked the head of the mill for permission to use it for a Sunday school, a request he gladly granted. The work there has thriven until now the little building is used for a union Sunday school and by two denominations alternately for church services.

Great Falls Mill at Rockingham also had a varied experience. The mill, started in 1837, built in the village, sometime before the Civil War, a chapel which it still owns. About twenty years ago a tenement house was converted into a chapel, which served years later as the center for the group work and Sunday school carried on by a welfare worker who was much interested in religious affairs. She was a Presbyterian and used to get the Presbyterian minister of the town to come there and conduct revivals, so that it almost amounted to a Presbyterian mission.

About twelve years ago the mill erected a building to be used as a union church.

A somewhat similar service was performed by the owner of a small mill in the suburbs of a good-sized town. The mill, when it started, built a house for school and church combined, intending it to be interdenominational. But the Baptists predominated in the neighborhood, and so they used it more than any other group, though a union Sunday school was maintained. One of the chief executives was a Presbyterian and another a Methodist, and each used to invite preachers of his denomination to come there to hold services. More recently the mill has turned the building over entirely to the Baptists, Sunday school and all. In the case of the Morgan Mills in Scotland County the owner, an Episcopalian, lived near the mill. He built a chapel for the use of his own denomination, and services were held there for his family, for the village, and for such of the neighborhood people as chose to come. After his death it was used for a long time as a Presbyterian church, that denomination being very strong thereabout. Still later it was used alternately by several denominations, though the Presbyterians predominated.

One executive explained that his mill's one experience in church building was not very happy. The company's second plant and village form a distinct section of a large town. Some years after the mill started, the company built a church for the neighborhood and especially, of course, for its own employees. The building has been variously controlled—sometimes as a union church, sometimes by one denomination and again by another, no method being very satisfactory. Near another mill, a new plant built in 1917, the Methodists organized a church in 1923 with nineteen members. It grew rapidly and when the congregation wished to build, the mill agreed to give a little more than half the estimated cost—$8,000 out of $14,000 or $15,000. The church finally cost about $20,000, of which the mill gave a little over $9,000. The debt was raised by 1926. The mill superintendent is a most enthusiastic member of this church. One executive said that the mill gave the land for the two churches "on the hill" and helped to build them, but as it was done before he came to the company he did not know what proportion of the total cost

the mill furnished. He added that the mill continues to pay the church's fire insurance premiums, and he therefore thinks it must have helped rather largely. This is perhaps a case like that of the school mentioned in an earlier chapter: the company, knowing it would be called upon to help heavily in replacing the buildings, carries the insurance for its own protection.

Several mills are assisting the building programs of churches by carrying building and loan shares. One is paying $24 a month for each of two churches that have recently been built. The manager of another mill explained that the two very live churches of the village are off mill property but added that the mill keeps them in repair, having just recently given $500 for that purpose. "We usually give them what they ask for."

A mill recently established in a small village by a Northern company added greatly to the size of the community and taxed the two little churches beyond their capacity. Both churches called on the mill for help, the Methodist first. The superintendent felt that the mill should help the Baptist church instead, as about 90 per cent of the employees were of that denomination. But since the Methodists asked for aid the mill gave each church $250. The Methodists used their gift for running expenses, the Baptists for enlargement. "Yes, the company will help the churches right along—it is only right that it should," he added when asked about the probable future policy.

Employees of a new and highly successful novelty mill near an old mill town are attending the churches in the town though they have a Sunday school held in the village school building. The manager was asked if the mill was going to encourage church building or allow the situation to continue as at present. "Oh, they can build all they want to. We will give them the land and help them some in the building." When asked if he did not think more effective services could be held if the employees remained in coöperation with the older churches which were not far away, he replied, "I guess so, but if they want to build we are not going to discourage their doing it." On the other hand, the management of another plant, to which reference will be made in another connection, told the group who wanted to build a second church in the village that it was not

needed and that the mill would not permit it. Several other executives expressed regret at the multiplication of churches at the same time that they were helping to build new ones.

Usually grants are made for specific purposes, though they are not always used for those purposes. A case in point is that of the two churches in the newly expanded village already mentioned. Another was that of a mill which gave $1,500 to a church to help, as it thought, in the erection of a building, but the congregation built a pastor's home with it instead. Sometimes the mill supplements gifts with loans which are to be repaid gradually. The company last mentioned gave $1,000 to another church in its village four years ago and lent $1,000 more, which is being repaid. Not so successful was the experience of another. A loan to build a hut for the Sunday school and for general purposes was being repaid so slowly that at length the mill wrote off the debt.

One superintendent said that his mill, as such, had no policy of aiding the church, though the president and he himself gave personal contributions, since it was a live church and one which helped the community. Recently the members "turned in and painted the church themselves—collected the money for the paint, and the men worked on it after mill hours." The superintendent passed by while they were at work and remarked: "You all did not treat me right—did not let me know you were doing this so I could help." So they sent someone down to the office in a few days to get a contribution to the paint fund! In fact there were several cases in which surprise was expressed that aid was not asked—"You know people always expect the mill to help on things like that."

PERSONAL INTEREST AND LEADERSHIP

The above cases are cited chiefly to give some idea of the variety of situations and policies to be found in the relations of the mills to the churches of their villages. They show just as clearly another fact: that the mill management, as represented by the acting executive or the superintendent, knows a great deal about the village churches, a fact quite naturally to be expected. This official knows that the mill will be called upon to contribute to the church financially; besides, he is

concerned in any matter that may greatly affect his workers. But there is another interest that is apparent in many cases, and this is a genuine personal interest in religious activities, which is expressed in leadership in the Sunday school or in other church work. Since such activities relate to the personal life of the executives concerned, an inquiry into them lay somewhat outside this study of welfare work on the part of the mills; moreover, they are not matters upon which many men would care to be questioned. Some, however, referred to such work incidentally, while others told of it in considerable detail as a part of their whole personal interest in the welfare of the village.

There are many motives back of this active leadership. In the first place, as was pointed out at the opening of this chapter, the hold of the church is still very strong on all classes in the state, the employers hardly less than the workers. Many of these men would be active church and Sunday school workers wherever they were placed; it is inevitable that they should be such in a community where able leaders are scarce. Moreover, the villagers expect such leadership from the men in managerial positions all the way down to foremen. A Northern manager recently transplanted to the South was a bit surprised that men in positions similar to his seemed to be expected by the employees to take a leading part in religious affairs. He was more surprised to find, when he went to associations and conventions and became acquainted with such men, that they very often did play these parts and took some pride in the fact. His foremen, also transplanted, were likewise surprised, if not a little disturbed, at what seemed to be expected of them in the way of church work! Several cases were found where an owner or manager and his family, though they had moved into a nearby town, continued to hold membership in the mill church because they considered that they were needed. Many men referred incidentally or otherwise to the teaching of Sunday school classes by themselves or other members of the official group. More than one such teacher or superintendent in a Sunday school is proud of his record of never being absent except when he is out of town on pressing business, and there were several instances in which an official made it his policy to arrange his trips to New York on mill

business so that he might reach home for his Sunday duties in church or Sunday school. The writer has lived in mill villages and mill towns long enough to be well aware of the force of this tradition and common expectation that men in any position of leadership in the mills shall occupy, if not a proportionate, at least some, position of leadership in the church. The man who does not conform is criticized by his fellows and by the humblest villager as not being interested in the real good of the people and of the village.

Since these matters are so personal as to be outside the scope of this survey and since no attempt was made to secure the facts of such individual participation, no summary of it is possible here. A few cases, however, can be described which will show the attitude of managers toward what they consider their semi-official and personal responsibilities in this field. One of the first men interviewed remarked incidentally that until quite recently he had taught two classes made up largely of his employees each Sunday, one in the morning in the town where one of his mills was located and the other in the afternoon at the nearby village where he had a second mill. "I reckon I ought to be doing it now," he added.

Near a town in which the churches divided the surrounding mill village among them as "spheres of influence" for mission Sunday schools, one superintendent was proud of the record of his village, the only one in the vicinity where a live Sunday school had been carried on continuously for the twelve years he had been connected with the mill. He is superintendent of the Sunday school and is evidently responsible for the interest in it. "I've been in the mill business forty-five years, working up from the bottom and have been superintendent many years. I have been superintendent of twelve Sundays schools and started five of them—always get a Sunday school started, if there is not one there when I get there."

Reference has been made elsewhere to old mills near which the owners built chapels or small churches to serve their own families, the villages, and the surrounding country, and to some owners who got preachers of their denominations to come to chapels that were used by several denominations. That such work is not limited to the old mills with a family tradition to uphold is shown by a case of a new isolated little mill where

the young, rather sophisticated manager and chief owner was plainly proud of the live little Sunday school of which his mill superintendent seemed to be the mainstay. Another superintendent was so enthusiastic about the new church that he took the interviewer over it and recounted, not as superintendent of the mill but as an active leading man in the church, its fine record in paying off its debt, its outside contributions, and its inner workings.

In the case of one mill that had long been in the same family the superintendent mentioned especially the interest of the late owner's wife. She and her husband both assumed an active leadership, and upon her death she left a small legacy to the church. A case similar to this was that of the owner of a small country mill whose family had long been the leaders and mainstay of the country church near by. He and his family have in more recent years moved to the town some five or six miles away but retain their membership in the old church and attend services there every Sunday. "We sort of feel that if we did not the church would go to pieces, though we may be wrong in that. I have been superintendent of Sunday school for many years, my daughter teaches a class, and my wife takes an active part in the church work."

Of course there are scores of mills in the state where officials and owners take no personal part in village churches. The number of these has increased as more mills have been built in or near large towns; and as automobiles have made it possible for such men to live in well-to-do residential sections of the town instead of near the mill, as was formerly the custom. There are even mills, especially hosiery mills whose employees are more diffused among the other working classes of the town, where even superintendents and foremen have little part in church leadership. But it is safe to say that there are very few mills whose villages constitute any sort of community within themselves where owner, manager, or at least foremen do not occupy positions of leadership in church work. This is partly because they are interested; partly because a selective process has gone on, men active in religious work, or at least known to be a "good influence," being given a certain preference in advancement; partly because such men are almost expected to assume duties of this kind *ex officio*. In most

cases they wish to do so; in some there can be no doubt that they do it as a part of their job.

AID AND INTEREST AS A MEANS OF CONTROL

The first question which arises in the mind of the student of the mill church is: how does this aid and leadership on the part of the management affect church policy? Is it used as a means of controlling the preacher or the church? Obviously this is a question which would take much more careful study than is afforded by a mere collection of opinions either from mill managements or employees. On account of the public interest in the problem of control in the mill village, it is a question upon which careful, unbiased observation in many mill villages should extend over a considerable period of time before an adequate answer could be given. Of course, simply as leading church members, the influence of the mill executives is bound to be very strong, just as the influence of the same men on school boards is probably greater as leading citizens than as mill executives *per se*, provided the two positions can be distinguished.

Then it must be remembered that the clergymen of the denominations most active in mill villages naturally believe and preach doctrines which would be acceptable in the main to a capitalistic employer—a gospel of work, of gratitude for present blessings, and of patience with economic and social maladjustment as temporal and outside the sphere of religious concern—if indeed they mention such things at all in the course of their evangelical appeals and their descriptions of the glories to come. These views and this emphasis are shared in the main by the church members. So far the mill managers have had little need for exercising a control ready to their hand; except in sporadic and relatively unimportant instances things naturally go as they would have them. Besides, it is easy to see that the mill managers can, through their direct personal participation in the church and their prestige in the village, and quite without resort to the power given by ownership of the church property or contribution to building programs or running expenses, exert an influence that will amount to a control. That it is generally accepted in good faith and

with good results seems just as probable; that it sometimes is felt to work a rank injustice and become religious persecution is inevitable.

For, although the method of this study was not suited to collecting data on the matter of control, a few situations were described incidentally, though quite frankly, which throw some light on the subject. The four cases in point relate to two sects which at least in the villages concerned had appealed on a highly emotional basis to a rather poor type of people. One man interviewed said that the mill contributed regularly to two churches, that a third was not very active, and that "the fourth is the Holiness [Pentacostal Holiness] and we would not care to help or encourage that anyhow." A second mentioned a Holiness church near his village but nearer still to another mill. When asked how its members were regarded by the mills, he said "Very well—but they are more dignified here than in most places—don't cut up and make themselves objectionable. Besides they have a strict superintendent over there and they know he won't stand for it." At a third mill, where the villagers attend the town churches, the building which was formerly a village school is used for Sunday school and revivals. The mill exercises a permissive control over revivals and will not let Holy Rollers [the Church of the Living God] hold meetings there. Shortly before the interview the mill had again refused them. When asked if this did not make some of the people of that group angry, the executive admitted that some felt a little resentful. He said that at these meetings they "stay up half the night and go to sleep on the job the next day," and besides they are a poor class whom he does not care to have among the employees at all. The fourth man showed more severity. He would not allow Holy Rollers to hold meetings in the village. When asked how he prevented them he explained that he had organized a committee of the church folks which must give permission for all meetings held in the village. This committee knows his feelings in the matter and "besides, the Baptists and Methodists—the chief denominations here—are not overly anxious to have the Holy Rollers come in anyhow. They just tear up a village and a community, keep folks at the meetings till all hours of the night so that they are not fit to work the next day, and they keep such meetings going

for two months with shouting and carrying on. Here they are the sorriest sort of folks and not desirable in the community on general principles."

COMMUNITY AND INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCHES

Some of the situations described earlier in the chapter have hinted at definite policies on the part of some mills in regard to the building of additional churches. A few mills maintain standing offers, well known to the employees, to give aid ranging from 20 per cent to 50 per cent of the cost of construction to any new church. Others have pursued such a policy without definitely formulating it; any group wishing to build a new church knows from the experience of the older churches that when it is ready to build, its application for aid will be granted on some such basis.

This policy on the part of the mills has resulted in over-churching many villages—three, four, or even six denominations being represented in some. In several cases villages have two churches of a single denomination, resulting from a split in the original congregation. The mills have helped the new organizations just as they would have helped a separate denomination. One or two men expressed regret over such splits, but said that they felt the mill could hardly refuse the aid. Still others regretted the over-churching though they aided all. A few carried their opposition into action, definitely refusing aid to additional churches and in one case actually preventing a new denomination from coming into the village. This superintendent said he explained his stand thus to the applicants for aid: that the Baptist church already there and of long standing had enrolled almost all the church-going people of the village, that it was a good live church and a constructive force in the community, and that if the nucleus of Methodists who wanted to build a church were to be encouraged the result would be two weak churches. Moreover, the few Methodists who did not wish to join the Baptists could easily attend a nearby town church. Another mill executive of long experience made a sweeping criticism of mills for multiplying weak little churches by their policy of helping so many.

On the other hand, there are a considerable number of mill

villages which have only one church and one denomination. There were twenty-nine such individual churches observed during this study, the smallest being that in the village of a mill employing only thirty workers and the largest at one employing about four hundred. Most mills had between one hundred and two hundred employees, and included all types: the most isolated country mills, suburban mills, and small mill towns. A single Sunday school was found in thirty-one cases, in most of these belonging to the single church, though a few villages had Sunday schools which depended on the nearby town churches for preaching services. In many of these groups the persons interviewed commented on the fact that villagers of other denominations took active part in the Sunday school, serving as teachers and in other capacities. It would seem that in spite of over-churching and church splits the mill villages are progressing at least as fast as other communities in the way of denominational coöperation. In eleven cases villages had union Sunday schools, though in two it was specially mentioned that the religious literature of the two or three chief denominations was used in turn. Attempts at union churches are less common. Only one village had a real union church; in four others two or three denominations used the same chapel or church on different Sundays. In fact, this has been the history of many of the one-denomination churches and villages: the mill would build a chapel or church for joint use of this sort, and gradually as one denomination grew stronger it would take over the sole occupancy of the building.

MILL VILLAGES AND TOWN CHURCHES

The idea generally prevails that every mill and its village has its church or churches which the employees attend exclusively. Again the warning so often sounded in this study must be reiterated: there is no such thing as a general rule in any phase of cotton mill village life in North Carolina. Of the 322 mills here included we can distinguish several general groups in the matter of church facilities. First there are thirty-seven single mills—large and small—which have their own church or churches because they are located too far from towns to make attendance possible there.

Secondly, there are sixty-nine plants in or near suburban areas which have their own churches. Of these perhaps twenty are near enough to a town to use the town churches, but the others are far enough away to make attendance inconvenient, inasmuch as there is in only a very few cases a public transportation system. It is interesting to note in passing that the people in four out of these twenty villages near town churches formerly belonged to the latter but have recently built churches in their own villages. There were, then, in these two groups 106, or slightly over a third, whose workers attended village churches exclusively.

The third group of twenty additional plants might really be regarded as belonging to the second class since they are in small towns which consist almost exclusively of two or more mill villages. Of these towns, however, sixteen are incorporated, and the others are composed of good-sized groups of villages. It seems justifiable to distinguish between these and the first two groups, in which the employees of a single mill associate only with one another in church as well as at work.

A fourth group is made up of twenty-two plants at each of which there is a village church, but where people of other denominations depend on the neighboring churches, mixing with town, or occasionally with country, congregations. In five of these cases the people were formerly served entirely by these other churches, a chapel having been built in the village only recently.

The fifth group, consisting of 173 plants, of which forty-nine are hosiery mills, are served entirely by the churches of the town or countryside, there being no distinctive mill church. To be sure, sixty of these mills might be considered parts of mill towns, but these towns are distinguished from our third group by their greater size, by containing mills operated by several companies, by having a nucleus of regular town life with its complement of tradesmen and professional men, and by being country trading centers as well.

The attitude of the mill executives, villagers, and citizens on the matter of church attendance is almost as varied as the situations themselves. They all agree rather well in one respect: approval of the way they manage it in their own town! Where the mill village has its own church, each of the above classes

points to the fact with satisfaction at the completeness and convenience of the village, the advantages and benefits of having a church of their own, and the opportunity it offers for their own leadership. At the other extreme are the villages which have no churches; yet here also manager and public alike will remark with pride that the employees go to the same churches as other people and mingle with them, that one worker is superintendent of a Sunday school, one plays the organ, and so on. In villages where the situation is mixed, with attendance at both a village church and nearby town churches, there are obviously advantages to be emphasized.

Some of the attitudes in specific cases may be of interest. Mention has already been made of mission chapels built near mills and operated by town churches. These are eloquent testimonies to one or both of two facts: that the mill people did not come to the town churches, or that the town churches had been unable or unwilling to make them feel sufficiently welcome. In four cases mill executives specifically said that the town churches made little effort to welcome the mill people—that they felt too aristocratic, or were too cold, or tried to be "citified." One executive, an active member of a town church, said with some asperity that his fellow members went out of their way to be nicer to the mill people than to anybody else, because they knew the former felt that they were not wanted, but he could see that it all did little good—the mill people would not come there much. In a dozen or so cases the persons interviewed emphasized the good relations existing in mixed churches, this being specially common in old mills. One small mill in a growing town employs many second generation members of the original workers' families. They have always gone to the town churches and school and have always known the other townspeople, and there appears to be no feeling of constraint on either side. They mingle as other working class people of the town do, perhaps ranking a bit higher than many because they have been there so long. It is significant that mission chapels have been tried in this neighborhood without much success, the people "preferring to go to the churches that have good music and good preachers."

Relations in mixed country churches seemed to be better on the whole than in suburban ones, probably because most rural

mills are of some years' standing, have a small labor turnover, and still draw families from the neighborhood, so that the two groups have many friendships and blood relationships to unite them. A curious exception to this concerns a tiny country mill forty years old, where the country people nearby never have attended the little church started by the founder of the mill because of their prejudice against mill work and mill workers.

Some further reflections of sentiment regarding mill and town churches will be found in a later chapter in which are quoted opinions of mills in general. It is sufficient to say here, by way of summary, that aid and encouragement of churches is a form of activity in which more mills have engaged at some time, both in the way of financial help and personal interest, than in any other one activity. And it has been most expected of them by villagers and fellow townsmen alike. Though there are beginning to be some criticisms on account of the possibilities of church control by the mills, these have on the whole been longer in coming and less severe than in the case of the schools. The isolation of mills with respect to church facilities has been less marked than is commonly supposed. However, if there can be said to be a present trend, it is toward the multiplication of mill churches rather than toward their blending with the other churches of the community, as is decidedly the case with schools. For while mill village churches have often been established where none existed during the earlier history of the mill, there is not a single case of a church or Sunday school's being given up to unite with those of an outside community about or near the mill village,

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL COMMUNITY WORK AND WORKERS

There is no satisfactory term for that whole group of extra-mill activities which have to do with general community life. Welfare work, social work, community work are all used, but as was suggested in Chapter I, they have misleading connotations and limitations. One of the most common terms in welfare work used in its narrowest sense. (See p. 11.) That phrase is not in as bad odor in the South as it is in many parts of the country. But it has the disadvantage of including in the minds of many people activities such as night classes, health work, or group insurance, which in this study have been treated elsewhere. The term social work applies even less accurately, if indeed any mill executive understands it in the sense in which it is used by the great city organizations or the social work schools. Practically the only phase of social work carried on in the mill village is some casual case work. It is casual because the worker is rarely if ever trained for case work; she does it as a side issue or as one of a thousand odds and ends in the day's work of initiating and carrying on a program as well as adjusting difficulties; she is not free to seek the solution of a family's troubles purely as a social or economic question but attacks it in terms of adjustment to the mill and the village.

The former term, social secretary, was abandoned before many positions to which it was applied were well started in the South. Some villages which have an industrial Y.M.C.A. center most of their general social and recreational activities around that institution and call it all "Y work." A few call the person hired to initiate and head their community program a librarian, a club worker, or a girls' worker, or, as in the case of the Erwin Mills at Durham, the director of the Auditorium, which is really a community center.

Out of all these designations we are here somewhat arbitrarily selecting the term community work. It is used as much

as any of the others. More important, it emphasizes what is, after all, the main interest of such workers and of the managers who hire them, namely, group relationships. It is a job of interpretation, often of the mill to the village and the village to the mill, always of groups and individuals within the village to one another. It looks toward the promotion of community spirit and solidarity and village betterment. Community workers in this sense do anything from visiting the sick to organizing amateur theatricals, from initiating a sewing class for children to conducting a foremen's training course. They usually do the things they are best fitted to do, or the things in which the man who employs them is most interested, or things which opportunity and village interest allow them to do. Among such variations from mill to mill, from worker to worker, and even from year to year in the same mill, it is impossible to list all the activities; it is manifestly impossible to name any one work which is always undertaken. It is safe, however, to say that most workers visit in the homes of the village in order to make personal contacts, to enlist and maintain interest in their programs, to give advice, and to keep up with the needs for relief and to administer it. Most workers initiate and keep going some sort of group activity in the way of recreation clubs with educational features or educational classes with a recreational side, usually among the mothers, the young unmarried women, and the girls. Workers among the men and boys are less common, but when they do exist they usually serve as bandmaster, boy scout leader, or athletic director. Another common activity is the conducting of a library or book and magazine exchange. And of course practically all general workers initiate and conduct occasional, special, and seasonal programs and celebrations and events of other sorts.

Besides these many difficulties in terminology and in limitation of the scope and nature of what we shall call community work, there is a further difficulty in the lack of agreement regarding the method of carrying it on. The term is certainly inadequate if it presupposes a specially employed worker, since much that affects the community organization of a mill village has been, and still is, done by volunteer workers or by members of the managerial or supervisory group among their

semi-official interests and even duties. While every student of the mill village knows this to be true, it is nevertheless a fact that many executives consider that their company does no community work unless it employs a leader for clubs and recreational groups and classes. In the discussion of the history of welfare work in Chapters XVI and XVII will be traced the stages of its development in industry in general and among textile plants in particular. These stages, first, spasmodic volunteer work, secondly, specialized work by persons trained for and delegated to certain tasks, and thirdly, the coördination of all activities relating to employees under a single head, are found clearly defined in the phase of welfare work which we are here naming community work. Many mills in North Carolina have passed through some of them, though most mills are still in the earliest one. No attempt will be made to divide the mills into groups on a chronological basis, but purely as to their degree of development. For a mill fifty years old may still be in the stage that a mill two years old has already passed.

VOLUNTEER WORK

Most of the early volunteer activities, while community work in a broad sense, have been or will be treated in the chapters on night schools, health work, relief work, and the like. For it is out of such beginnings that present welfare work, including community work, has grown if in any individual mill it has passed beyond this stage. Among the mills started before 1890 there are some where the tradition of interest on the part of the owner's family is still strong; in others it was evident from the comments of the few employees encountered, of the managers, and in some cases of their wives, that the owners' families knew as little about the village as they did about the mill operations themselves.

In general, it seems that this personal work of the owner's family is declining, because it is now more usual to employ a paid worker for this purpose and because good roads and automobiles have brought about a situation where fewer of the owners live in the villages. And yet we find occasional mention of it, and the manager of one of the newest mills in the state told of the interest of his wife in the villagers and her work

among them. We can almost take it for granted that an organized welfare or community program has grown out of an interest on the part of the chief executive or of some person close to him either in the management or personally. Thus at the French Broad Cotton Mills near Asheville, community work was started at the suggestion of the wife of the president of the company which added these mills to its chain. Before they were acquired a little volunteer work had been carried on for a while in a South Carolina plant of the company by a woman of the vicinity on her own initiative. It proved so well worth while that the mill took over the volunteer worker, gave her a salary, and furnished her a house and equipment. She was so successful that the president's wife used her influence to get similar work started in other mills of the company and used to send new community workers to this South Carolina plant to get their training under the woman there. A community worker was employed at the French Broad Mills in 1917 and continued until 1924.

At the Selma Cotton Mills some volunteer community work, visiting, and club work were being done by the women of Selma thirteen years ago when the present superintendent took charge, but it was not being well received by the villagers. The new superintendent was interested in raising the tone of the village and thought the work that one of these volunteers was doing was worth encouraging. He paid her a small amount out of his own pocket to enable her to give more time to it and after a few months induced his management to put her on full time for classes, clubs, religious work, sociables, visiting the sick, and conducting play periods for the children.

One of the best examples of the development of a welfare program out of volunteer work is at the Erwin Mills in West Durham. As early as 1900 Mrs. Erwin and her sister, Mrs. Leak, encouraged the women of the village to meet in groups in the various homes where the two ladies would join them and read to them. Books were scarce and the ability to read was probably almost as rare, so that this neighborly service was much liked and enjoyed. It is no accident that much of the community work at these mills centered, and still centers, around the slowly growing but now considerable library. About 1900 also several women of the Presbyterian church of West

Durham, who lived quite near the mills, started a sewing class for the children of the village "because they [the women] liked to do it and because they thought it would be a great help to the children." They taught the children to make bedquilts—a popular and useful accomplishment at that time—to darn, and to sew all sorts of simple stitches. These and similar activities went on with more or less regularity till about 1915. About that time some of the volunteers, working through the ladies' auxiliaries of the churches of the village and backed up and assured of aid by the mill management, formed a welfare club of the married women. Their chief purpose was to interest the mill in securing a welfare worker. The club engaged to pay half the salary of the worker through dues and the raising of money by entertainments if the mill would pay the balance. The management agreed to do this and set aside a dwelling house for the welfare worker's use in holding meetings and for other activities. She formed a mothers' club and a girls' club, arranged with the Durham Public Library to open a little branch library, and did some visiting. As the work expanded the mill added a large room, and later another, to the house to accommodate larger meetings. In 1916 the club decided to try a day nursery for the benefit of the mothers who worked. They ran this for about a year on the same general basis of mill aid and encouragement. It never was very successful, however, because the women could not become accustomed to leaving their babies there with confidence, and so it was discontinued.

In 1918 the original worker resigned, but her successor added new activities. The president, Mr. John Sprunt Hill, gave some money for a library, which was located in a large brick residence; the other activities moved into this building and thereafter were centered around the library. One of the volunteer workers of long standing became the part-time librarian. Gradually other workers have been added until the present staff, making use of a new community building built in 1922, carries on one of the most complete community programs in the state. One gathers that the welfare club has become so overshadowed that it survives merely as one of the many clubs now headed by various members of the staff and meeting at the Auditorium. This is one of the best possible

examples of a natural expansion of volunteer work of various kinds. Of course it would have remained slight and spasmodic but for the continued and increasing financial backing of the mill and, what is probably more important, the continual encouragement of the management, particularly of Mr. W. A. Erwin. Indeed, one suspects that even in the early stages his guiding hand and far-sighted planning were behind the welfare club more than the members or even the volunteer workers realized; if so, he must have shown rare tact in this direction, so that it seemed quite their own program backed up by an unusually coöperative management.

Several other mills have aided volunteer workers from the adjoining towns in inaugurating programs of various kinds in the villages. Sometimes there has been only a single spurt of missionary zeal on the part of some individual, club, Sunday school class, or church. A few times this zeal has been fairly continuous over a series of years; at others it has been spasmodic, ebbing and flowing no doubt with the interest shown toward the fostering organization itself. These volunteers seem always to have approached the mill management before starting, to ask for permission to do the work, for endorsement by the head of the mill, which will give the work a better standing, and almost as universally for financial aid. The sources of information on this point being chiefly mill managements and hence rather one-sided, it is perhaps rash to say that the volunteers always got the permission, backing, and aid requested. But this information, added to the opinions of a few citizens and representatives of the volunteer workers' groups, supplemented as well by personal knowledge and experience, leads the writer to believe that such a statement would not be inaccurate. And besides these instances described by the various managers, no doubt there have been many such spurts of missionary, Good Samaritan, or community spirit that have long since run their course and been forgotten.

Therefore no attempt has been made here to enumerate all these sporadic and outside efforts, for no such enumeration can be complete. A survey, however, of the present status of community work, which will be made later in the chapter, will contain typical examples of all stages of this work for the reason already advanced: that there are some mills still in

the simplest stages, though they may be located within sight of those which are in a much later stage.

PICNICS AND TREATS

One simple form of community work, initiated by the mill, that has long been popular is the picnic or annual celebration. One of these, dating from the nineties, was the annual excursion of the Orion Knitting and Kinston Cotton Mills to Morehead, when the company chartered a train and furnished cold drinks and the people took baskets of dinner. It was discontinued during the war when it was impossible to get trains, and a barbecue was substituted which was financed by the mill and largely managed by committees from among the employees. Another celebration of about the same period was the basket picnic at Spray, where the company furnished drinks and amusement. For many years this was a summer festivity of note not only for the mill workers but for the town and surrounding country. It became so large and so commercialized that it finally lost its attraction and died out about ten years ago. The Fourth of July celebration for the Proximity Manufacturing Company was, from the early years of the century until about 1917, the most spectacular of these events.

A description of one of these celebrations is given in *Cotton* for January, 1908: "On the Fourth of July the company gives its employees an annual picnic, providing food and refreshments for between five and ten thousand people. The magnitude of these affairs can be gathered from the bill of fare, which at the picnic of 1907 included 1,000 watermelons, 20,000 bananas, 50 bushels of roasted peanuts, 40 boxes of lemons, 1,000 pounds of cake and enough ice cream for 18,000 to 19,000 saucers. Music was furnished by the Proximity Band and a minstrel performance given by the White Oak Minstrels both of these organizations being composed exclusively of operatives of the mills." A description of the same picnic in 1906 in *Mill News* (July 12, 1906) is in part as follows: "Over five thousand people attended and were served, . . . the main lunch consisting of chicken, ham, mutton, sausage, cheese and preserve sandwiches with pickles, tomatoes and other relishes. The bill of fare included 2,200 loaves of bread, 650 pounds of cake,

2,000 fried chickens, 1,000 pounds of ham, 700 pounds of lamb, and 500 dozen hardboiled eggs . . . 250 gallons of ice cream," and proportionate quantities of lemonade, oranges, peanuts, bananas, and cigars. There were speeches and announcements of winners of the prizes for prettiest yards and a presentation by the superintendent of gifts from the employees to each of the two owners. "To purchase these gifts a voluntary subscription was taken up in the mill and every hand without a single exception contributed. No one was allowed to give more than five cents." In the afternoon there were fancy dancing and a minstrel show with a string band, all undertaken by the employees. The regular mill band provided music all through the day. "In one corner of the grove a booth was erected and Mr. Cone had his handsome Victor Talking Machine sent out and kept in operation. This proved a most popular form of entertainment." In 1913 there were 8,000 at the dinner.

A smaller mill gave a picnic, furnishing the dinner—a barbecue or Brunswick stew—to all its employees and villagers from 1917 to 1919, but stopped "because it got so we were feeding the whole country-side and it ran into too much money." Some six or eight others mentioned similar picnics which were still given each year. One celebrated at the commencement of the consolidated school, another at the camp meeting season, and so on.

Somewhat similar, of equally long standing and still more common, are the Christmas "treats," which sometimes take the form of gifts distributed at a Christmas tree during a community meeting at which a program is offered. About as frequently, however, the treats are gifts of a ham or a turkey, or a basket of fruit and confections, to each family, distributed from the mill office or store, and are in no sense a form of community entertainment. Another sort of celebration initiated by the mill management officially, or sometimes unofficially as chief citizens of the town, are various flower shows, community fairs, baby shows, etc. The flower show at Randleman is of long standing and is an event of considerable community importance in its festivity as well as in the creation of interest in flower raising. Several other such celebrations are to be found at plants having community workers; as they are usually due

to the initiative of the worker herself, they can be more properly discussed under a later section.

BEGINNINGS IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF SPECIAL WORKERS

The earliest worker employed especially for community activities among the mills included in this study, and so far as the writer can learn, the first in the state, was at Proximity Manufacturing Company, Greensboro. The welfare and community work of this company has had much publicity as a pioneer work both in time and extent, so that the story of its beginning seems appropriate here.

The Cone brothers, Moses and Ceasar, who founded the mill in 1895, had always been interested in the welfare of their people, had already set up a nine months' school for the children of the village, and in other ways had laid the foundations for their later policies. In 1903 a sister of the Cones, a doctor, visited them from her home in Baltimore, bringing with her another woman, also a doctor, who had been resident physician at the State Normal College. Her friend was much interested in the mill village and seems to have been well informed about the new movements in industry. She told Mr. Ceasar Cone of the new social secretaries which Northern plants were beginning to use and suggested that he employ one to teach the villagers better living standards and better methods of housekeeping. He was attracted to the idea and asked her if she could find him such a woman. She said that she could but that such a worker ought to be a Southern woman. A few days later Mr. Cone and his guests were at the home of Dr. McIver, then president of the State Normal and Industrial College, now the North Carolina College for Women. Mr. Cone told his host of the suggestion and asked if there was anyone among the girls of his school who could do such work. Dr. McIver replied that he thought there was someone. A few days later he sent for Miss Pearl Wyche, who was to graduate in a month or so and had had training in domestic science. The idea was so vague in Mr. Cone's mind, and of course in Dr. McIver's, that he did not know really what they wanted to do—he told her that Mr. Cone wished her to come out to the village and stay first with one and then with another family, teaching them better

methods of cooking and home economics in general. It is not difficult to understand that such a plan was not attractive to a young woman about to graduate from college, and no decision was reached. But Dr. McIver and Mr. Cone both insisted on talking to her more about the work and finally she agreed to try it. During the summer Mr. Cone sent her to New York to see how training for settlement work was carried on and to visit many plants in the North which had social secretaries.

In the fall, when Miss Wyche returned to start work, Mr. Cone told her that he did not expect a miracle at once—that if in a year he could see "a very little improvement" he would be satisfied. Miss Wyche, after many years, is more and more appreciative of his wisdom in being willing to wait and to realize, though he was without experience in this field, that such things cannot be done in a day. Her first work consisted in fitting up a small cottage and starting classes in cooking and sewing for the children; in forming a garden club of the boys and girls to tend the garden attached to the house; and in holding little parties for the women in the small cottage sitting room. Miss Wyche, from a perspective of some twenty-three years, told the writer that it was very hard to get started because she herself did not really know what she ought to do; and even on the points upon which she was fairly sure, it was hard to explain what she was about in terms acceptable to the people. She could not say, as a community worker now can, that she was doing work like Miss ——— at some other mill, because no one else was doing it. And of course she had to be very careful not to antagonize the people—they were naturally very sensitive, since she was trying to teach them something which they probably felt that they already knew. It was easy to enlist the interest and coöperation of the children in cooking and sewing and gardening. But the women were harder. She started by having a series of afternoon gatherings in the little cottage, taking all the women on one street at a time so that the gatherings would serve as neighborhood group meetings as well as little sociables. The attitude of the village women towards this enterprise is illustrated by the response of one of them to an invitation to one of these early neighborhood meetings: "I don't think I will. I quit serving the devil a long time ago. I am trying to serve the Lord now." Most of her teaching of these

groups had to be indirect, through the example of the cottage and the serving of simple refreshments, and in friendly help with the sewing the women brought to the meetings. It was out of such beginnings, slowly, carefully, with some misunderstanding and much hearty appreciation and coöperation, that she gradually built up a community spirit which resulted, for one thing, in exhibits at the Greensboro Fair that would have been creditable to a town far larger and to one that would have considered itself much superior to a cotton mill village. And from these beginnings came, as well, a program that in school work, improvement in home conditions, enthusiasm, and general effectiveness attracted many visitors and was frequently commented on in books and magazine articles dealing with industrial and welfare topics.

A similar beginning was made at the Asheville Cotton Mills in 1906 when the mills employed a "welfare worker," a woman trained in domestic science, who taught cooking and sewing to the workers' families in an effort to help them improve their living conditions. She did this work largely as a group enterprise, starting classes and holding meetings first in a tenement house turned over for the purpose and later in a community house built for such activities. This mill is an integral part of the city of Asheville and is a small mill—having only 200 employees—which accounts for the fact that the work has not grown to the dimensions of the Proximity enterprise. Certainly it has suffered from no lack of interest on the part of management, worker, or employees, for it was continued until 1924, a record period for such a small plant, since most mills with fewer than 300 to 500 workers find in a short time either that they cannot afford the expense or that the number of people is not sufficient to occupy the full time of a community leader.

The third community program with a paid worker was at Spray, and like the Proximity venture it grew into one of the larger community schemes in the state. There had already been considerable volunteer community and welfare work carried on here by the churches of Leaksville, the nearby town, by members of the owners' and managers' families, and by the managers themselves. In 1906 the nine mills then in Spray, which were under the same general management, initiated what

was known as the Civic Association. It was incorporated under the laws of North Carolina for the following purposes as stated in Article 3 of its incorporation: "The objects for which this corporation is formed are to promote and encourage civic virtue among the people of the village of Spray; to aid in the development of the industrial, educational, religious, charitable, literary, and social interest of that community; to collect and diffuse information concerning the resources of Rockingham County, N. C., particularly that portion of it in and about Spray; to look after the streets, sidewalks, and sanitation of the village of Spray and provide ways and means for their improvement; to provide parks and amusements for the people at Spray; and to employ deputy sheriffs to act as police at Spray under the provision of existing Laws." The expenses of the Civic Association were, and still are, pro-rated among the various mills on the basis of the number of their employees. A part-time secretary was employed in 1907, and his duties have gradually grown until he is at present almost a full-time official. In the meantime, of course, many other workers have been added, mostly under the direction of this secretary, or at least in coöperation with him, to carry out the various purposes of the Association. One of the early community ventures was a reading room with magazines and books, the very simple duties of librarian being discharged by a janitor. This expanded until in 1909 it was merged into the Y.M.C.A., which had been organized under the aegis of the Civic Association. In 1910 the Y.M.C.A. moved into a new building, which was one of the largest used in North Carolina for industrial community purposes at the time and for some time following. The Civic Association took over the health work that had already been inaugurated, managed the big annual picnic and celebration that had been promoted by the mill managers, fostered the athletics and the band that were already in existence, and in 1912 started, through one of the nurses, some club work for girls. Thus by 1912 all the main lines of development that it has since followed were roughly indicated, though each has increased in multiplicity and variety of detail.

The mills at Roanoke Rapids, with the beginning of a cannery under the direction of an employed worker about

1910, introduced still a third method of approach to community work. This was in a day when home canning in most North Carolina families meant putting up fruits only, as few vegetables were canned at home and the use of bought canned vegetables was almost unknown. Each worker, one at Roanoke Rapids and one at Rosemary near by and under the same management oversees a fully equipped cannery, to which the village women bring their vegetables and can them under her supervision and direction. The cannery is a very busy spot in the season and a place of considerable sociability. All through the year meetings of the women are held there, as well as those of the girls' canning club. The two supervisors of canning are full-time workers who, during the rest of the year, do regular community work—home visiting, creating interest in gardens and advising about them, and holding a few classes at the canneries. There is a great deal of other community work carried on at Roanoke and Rosemary but most of it has grown up about the work of the nurses and doctors, where it touches health matters, and about the school for the young people—for boy and girl scouts, training in music, and the like.

Surprising though it may be, these four companies or groups of plants including sixteen mills are the only ones that had community workers before 1914. If we add three others that had, or had had, a doctor, one that had a practical nurse, and one a nurse solely for the plant, we have the total extent of the outside activities carried on by paid workers prior to 1914.

IMPETUS OF THE WAR

The depression in business which accompanied the outbreak of the World War was followed in 1915 by a gradual recovery. This increase in prosperity and profits, in mill building and enlarging, went on at an increasing speed until the climax was reached in 1918–20. The mills were making money and could well afford the relatively small outlays necessary to provide community work and workers. Some critics of and commentators on the increase in welfare work in this period maintain that the increase in taxes during the latter part of the war and just after it caused managers to start such schemes

and build community houses, provide better dwellings, and put in other improvements as a means of avoiding high taxation. It is very likely that many felt they had better make improvements while they could afford it, and no doubt better houses and some water and sewerage systems resulted from this feeling; but if they supposed that these expenditures were going to save them much in taxes they showed little business acumen and little knowledge of the tax law. For under the tax rulings expenditures for sewerage systems, better dwellings, and community houses were charged to permanent improvements and not deducted from taxable profits. The total amounts spent on the running expenses of welfare and community programs were relatively small as compared with the cost of the community buildings and other such permanent improvements. These running expenses were of course deducted, not from the taxes but from gross income, as one of the expenses of operation. It would be a strange arithmetic that would induce a manager to spend $10,000 in operating a community program in order to save the 25 per cent, or whatever the percentage might be on the graduated scale, which this $10,000 would pay in taxes when he could have put the total amount, less the taxes, into dividends.

Besides, he had much better reasons for starting these activities at that time. With the building of new mills, the enlargement of old, and the running of night shifts, there was a shortage of labor, gradually growing more acute as it was aggravated by pressure for production and the removal of men to the army. Increases in wages alone were not sufficient to attract and hold workers whom every other occupation was also trying to secure. For even the experience of the munition factories, supported as they were with patriotic appeal, showed that if the wages of a worker rose faster than his standard of living he would work less regularly and move about more. Further, during this period the general press of the country increased the publicity of the welfare programs of industrial plants. The business magazines did the same, because more people were interested in the subject. Indeed, new magazines of this class sprang up apace for the study of all sorts of "personnel, human, and labor problems." Of these problems welfare activities were a conspicuous part, especially in in-

dustries which provided company housing or had their workers fairly well concentrated. Finally, with the progress of the war, there was a growth of community consciousness and solidarity that reached to the smaller towns and villages. Influenced by the example of the War Camp activities, communities began to pay more attention to recreation and community meetings, began to hold "sings" and rallies, and, as we have seen in connection with churches and night schools, there was always someone in the nearby town who wanted to do his or her particular kind of mission work in the mill village! It is no wonder mill managers "went in for" welfare work. Taken as a whole they had money to afford such activities for the first time in two decades; they thought that the expenditure would help them to hold the workers and make more profits; they read much about these things in the regular and trade press; they were urged by public opinion among their own class. It was the fashion.

No wonder, then, that we find during this period from 1914 to 1920 the largest number of community programs launched. If our information were exact regarding even the approximate dates of the expansion of existing programs—whether headed by employed leaders or not—it is the belief of the writer that the increase would be even more striking. In that period eighty mills making up forty welfare units employed a special worker to direct a program. In six of these units the worker was a nurse, but in two she had general community duties as well, and in three she followed, or was aided by, a general community worker. These eighty plants employ roughly 20,000 workers, being thus somewhat larger than the average of the mills in the state and than the others included in this study.

The nature of the work was somewhat along the lines of the pioneer programs described above, with perhaps more emphasis on group work and community gatherings. It was usually a development of the volunteer work that had previously gone on in the same villages. There are instances, however, where a management, carried away by the fad of the hour or by the hopes and promises of welfare work, employed a community leader and set her to the task of manufacturing a community program where little or nothing had been done along those lines before. As was to be expected, such programs

seldom weathered the storm of hard times and usually were discontinued when the first worker resigned to marry or to take a better job.

REACTION FOLLOWING THE WAR

If our analysis of the reasons for starting community work is correct, we should expect to find a reaction when the conditions that led to it were removed. And that is exactly what happened. Two single mills discontinued their paid workers in 1918 and 1919 because they did not consider the work enough of a success to justify the expense. Both of these simply did not engage a successor when their worker resigned. These two plants were as unusual in discontinuing the work as the pioneers had been in starting it. The reaction really began in 1920 with the severe break in the markets during June. Five units including six mills discontinued special workers in that year. In three of these cases the workers left and the managements were casting about for successors when the sudden change delayed them, and they never engaged another; one mill discontinued a worker at a change in management and did not continue the work because of the financial situation; the last of the six discontinued the worker because the management did not think the program was worth while.

From that year until the time of this survey the abandonment of schemes headed by paid workers has been gradual and has occurred at similar opportunities: when a worker resigned no successor was brought in, it being extremely rare that a worker was actually "laid off" or discharged; or when there was a change in management, a rather common thing during those years, the work lapsed. In all, twenty-seven units made up of forty-seven plants discontinued workers permanently; some dozen others abandoned for the time being a program headed by a paid worker and employed a new one after several years, or abandoned a part of the work, continuing to use one worker where they had had two or more, or kept one on part time instead of on full time as before. In a dozen units (twenty-four plants) the chief reason for discontinuing the worker was financial, though several other reasons contributed heavily. Other managers placed the leading cause elsewhere but added

the state of their finances as a secondary reason. It was, however, dull times that brought about the abandonment or retrenchment in many instances, just as prosperity and profits had caused the initiation and expansion of such schemes.

Naturally, the fact that the labor shortage was over had much to do with the attitude of some managers who had started this and other schemes as a means of attracting and holding workers. Naturally also, this was hardly a reason that would have been mentioned in discussions with managers, from whom most of this information was gained. But the guess that this was a determining cause is not so shrewd a one as it appears on its face, and for two reasons. In the first place, labor turnover did not stop or even materially diminish when the depression set in at the middle of 1920. Habits of moving accentuated by the boom times and news of higher wages at the next mill were not immediately discarded. Running from wage cuts and short time was as common as running to increases had been. It was not until 1925, after several minor ups and downs in the long textile depression, that anything like a normal rate of turnover was reached—if, indeed, there is any such thing as a normal rate. There were many executives interviewed in 1926 who said that moving in their villages was still far greater than before the war.

In the second place, while many mills temporarily laid off some workers, especially on night shifts, or merely did not fill jobs made vacant by departing workers, or even went on short time, most of them tried hard to keep their organization together in the hope and belief that the depression was a temporary thing. In fact, most managements that have become concerned over labor turnover as anything more than an inconvenience had their attention drawn to it in this period, when they were trying to continue operation at a temporary loss or at most with profits that looked infinitesimal after those of the preceding few years.

Labor supply and labor turnover, then, were not, in the opinion of the writer, nearly so great a cause for discontinuance and retrenchment of outside, and especially of community, activities as might appear on the surface. The financial reason already discussed and the indifferent quality of the community work and its unfavorable reception by the villagers were far

more important. A few managers frankly stated that the community workers "lay down on the job." Others in accounting for abandonment or retrenchment, for changes from nurse to welfare worker or *vice versa*, suggested either by their evasions or by their comments one or the other of two reasons besides finance: that the worker was not well-trained, was tactless, or did not fully understand in what her job consisted; or that the response of the villagers was so discouraging as to make the work seem not worth while. With three notable exceptions the companies which discontinued special workers are all small mills. It is the smaller company which feels more heavily the overhead per unit of production; it is the smaller village which provides fewer persons capable of being interested in the kind of activities the average community worker carries on.

PRESENT STATUS

The period of initiation of community programs on a large enough scale to make a worker necessary almost ceased in 1920. The long depression had most to do with this; the fact that practically all the larger companies either had such a system or had tried it out was another reason, while mill building and mill expansion was not adding greatly to the size of plants or companies. There have been, since 1920, eleven groups or units including twenty-five plants which inaugurated some sort of program headed by a person employed for the purpose, but every one was a special case unlike the ordinary community work of the previous period. In one case a doctor was provided, in one a practical nurse, in four others a nurse who served in coöperation with other mills or agencies, in one a company nurse. None of these did general community work. Their activities will be discussed in Chapter VIII. Of the four remaining who are community workers, one is on part time only, a second is shared with another company, a third is at a mill which has recently changed managements, and a fourth is really a religious worker supported by the village church with the contribution from the mill which was formerly used for church building, parsonage, and even pastor's salary.

Thus in the years following 1920 not only have some schemes been discontinued but there have been relatively few new ones

launched. It is not surprising, then, that we find the total number of companies and mills having paid workers on the job to be rather small among the mills included in this study. Of our 322 plants only eighty-eight had, in 1926, some sort of paid special worker. These eighty-eight plants made up twenty-nine units for welfare work. But three of these employed nurses who did no general community work and two employed doctors. Therefore, five units and twenty plants must be deducted to find the total number carrying on actual community work. In some of the sixty-eight remaining mills the workers are nurses who do community work along with their visiting and health work. Of course some that have community workers also have nurses, and a few have a whole corps of more or less specialized and functionalized workers. These latter mills range all the way from those at Leaksville-Spray-Draper, where the industries of the three towns combine in a program with music teachers, nurses, girls' workers, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, continuation school, night school and domestic science teachers, and volunteer part-time workers, all the way down to several plants which employ one of the local school teachers to lead club work and recreation and to teach sewing and basketry through the summer months.

Perhaps there have already been enough suggestions of the community programs to give the reader some idea of the kind of work carried on. A few additional instances of their growth and present status will show that they vary greatly in rate of development, in nature and intensity of work, and in apparent success.

1. A large mill three miles from an industrial town shared a community worker with a group of mills in the town for three or four years. This worker had girls' clubs, sewing classes, games on the school grounds and at the community hall, and a general recreation period or sociable twice a week. The mill provides a movie once or twice a week at the hall; general community meetings are held there and fraternal orders use it also. In 1926 this combination worker was discontinued and the mill has recently started one of the school teachers on a similar program for the summer. Last year cooking classes for adults were held in the new school building, where there is excellent equipment for school use. The policy

is toward utilization of the school building for as many community affairs as possible.

2. Three medium-sized mills under a single management employed a welfare worker in 1917. The next year they built a school costing $13,000, which included rooms and equipment for the club work, cooking classes, and recreation which the welfare worker had started. She did much visiting, helping the school with attendance and other problems as much as possible. She was a very good worker, conscientious and energetic, and had apparently had some training although the manager did not know where. He had a very hazy knowledge of her activities, since he required no reports from her—"did not want them, wanted her to go ahead as she thought best. We think she did good—didn't do any harm anyhow!" She resigned two years ago and was not replaced because of dull times.

3. A certain small plant recently engaged a nurse whose duties, it had been thought, would center around the first-aid room. Either this did not provide enough work or the nurse had an unusual amount of energy; for, in addition to holding one or two-day tonsil and adenoid clinics and giving typhoid treatment to everybody in the village, she does a great deal of general visiting and has started a girls' club and some tennis and basketball for girls.

4. About 1920 a good-sized suburban mill began employing one of the teachers in the school to spend her spare time with recreation among the girls, mostly in the form of sociables. In 1924 the management decided that the boys needed some attention, and so in her place they employed the village Methodist preacher for similar work with the boys. He has a scout troop, a baseball team, and various forms of activities for the boys centering about a playground equipped for outdoor games. A community hall which occupies one-fourth of an office and store building, erected five or six years ago at a cost of $70,000, is used by this worker and by the churches and Sunday schools for their sociables and is free to all groups in the community.

5. Another suburban mill does all its general welfare work through the most important church of the village. Formerly the money donated by the mill was spent for Sunday school

rooms or for the pastor's salary, but the church decided that it preferred to have a social worker who would rouse interest in the Sunday school and act as pastor's assistant. The worker employed has had training in the denominational school for such workers.

6. The manager of an average-sized suburban mill has long made a hobby of health and village cleanliness. When in 1919 the company employed one of the school teachers to do part-time welfare work she took over much of the manager's health campaign. She was so successful that the next year she was employed as a full-time community worker and added clubs, recreation, and cooking classes to her program. Late in 1925 the work was very regretfully discontinued on account of dull times.

7. A certain mill employed as its first welfare worker in 1917 a graduate of a well-known Bible school. Most of her work was religious in nature and was with the children. When she left after two years it was decided to try a nurse instead. She gave vaccines, took the children to clinics in the nearby town, held classes in first aid which very few joined and Little Mothers' Leagues which aroused much interest. She did some general community work such as staging a play or two. When she left the management determined to go back to welfare work, believing that it got more response. "All of them were good girls and conscientious workers, but just not suited personally to the work. It was largely a question of tact. Some gave the impression that they felt they were better than the folks, and that kept them from getting the right touch." The work was discontinued because it was not very successful.

8. A small town mill engaged a full-time welfare worker in 1918 after having had many years of volunteer work. "Had been considering it a long time, and thought it would help the people." During the next three years it used several workers, all trained for religious social work in a church school. They had sewing and cooking classes, canning lessons in season, flower gardening, and club work among the women and girls. None of these workers was very satisfactory, so that in 1921, in the midst of dull times, the mill discontinued such a community leader and has since depended upon the county welfare officer, the Red Cross nurse, and the Salvation Army for

the sort of activity which their own workers had carried on. The manager said that they got more trained service from these special workers than by having their own general worker.

9. A good-sized suburban mill in 1917 engaged one woman as the unusual combination of school superintendent and welfare worker. She employed the teachers and ran the school; she carried on sewing, cooking, and canning classes at the school building for the women, had community meetings and "all sorts of welfare activities," added the manager rather vaguely. When she left in 1921 the welfare side of the work was taken from the new school superintendent and is now carried on in spring and summer by one of the teachers and the county home demonstration agent. They do not get much response from the village women.

10. All the community work in another small village has centered around a community house, the first unit of which was built in 1910 for a library. A friend of a member of the firm, who was a reviewer on a New York paper, gave them many books, and their library contains several thousand volumes. It was kept open on certain hours a week by one of the villagers until 1915, when the company employed a community worker to take it over. The first worker had no training, the second was a trained nurse, and the latest one a trained community worker. They all had clubs, domestic science classes, and a kindergarten. Since 1924 the mill has had only a part-time worker, mostly for the kindergarten and home visiting. The library has gone back to its original arrangement. This retrenchment was due solely to business conditions, since the managers think that welfare work as they have experienced it has been a success.

11. A very old suburban mill has been in the same family for a long time, and the personal relations between the employees and the management were so close that not until 1920 did the company finally succumb to the fashion for community houses and workers. After five years of activities similar to those already noted, led by trained and conscientious workers, they were discontinued partly because the owners did not think they "got the worth of the money spent for it." Several interviews brought out an additional reason which was rather unique. Naturally, the brighter, more attractive girls of the

village were interested in the club work and the sociables held at the community house. Before long some of the young men from other sections of town commenced coming over to the community house, "boys who considered themselves better than the mill people. They would not have gone to the homes of these girls, nor to the community house, except for the fact that they had some bad motive. But this formed a good place for them to meet, they got acquainted with some of our girls, and would take them off to ride in their cars. It all came to a head about the time the last community worker resigned—we had not realized what was going on until then. I firmly believe that the clubs and community house were the cause of several of our girls being ruined, and we were glad to stop such activities. Those boys would never have been over here if it had not been for the opening the sociables gave them." The excellent community house is now used for only a few meetings, though the shower baths and billiard tables are still used considerably by the men.

12. A large group of mills built three community houses and hired three workers in 1919 to serve six of their plants located fairly close together. These houses seem to have been active centers until the past year or two, but now, on account of retrenchment, most of the community work is done in the homes of the people. The manager seemed so vague about the activities which had been carried on that he was asked how, since no reports were required, he knew whether his community workers were really on the job or not. "Yes, I know you can get some mighty sorry work done that way—we've had some workers as poor as anybody's, but those we have now are conscientious and hard working. For a person to have any success at this sort of work she has to have a missionary spirit and willingness to work anyhow, and reports would do no good."

13. A group of new mills put on their first welfare worker, an untrained but practical woman, in 1917 soon after the building of the first two plants. She used one of the tenement houses for her club work and canning, cooking, and sewing classes. When she resigned at the beginning of the depression she was not replaced until 1924, when a woman trained for religious, social, and community work was engaged. In 1926 the president of the mills presented to the town a community

building as a gift from the mills in memory of his father and mother. The money for running expenses comes from the town, and the board of aldermen control both the building and the activities. The community worker and a nurse, recently added, draw their salaries from the aldermen and report to them. The town is made up almost entirely of the mill families, but the board of aldermen contains several men, such as tradesmen, who are not connected with the company.

COMMUNITY HOUSES

Among the mills having community or special workers there were forty-eight community houses or their equivalents. The latter consisted of rooms or a hall over a store for community use or an addition to the school built especially for community work. We have seen that in several cases the earliest group work was carried on in the church, chapel, or school, in the mill office, or in the home of the owner or an interested leader. With the employment of special community workers a house for the program was usually deemed necessary. The earliest community houses were tenements turned over to the use of welfare workers for meetings and classes and were often fitted up in at least some respects as model houses to serve as a suggestion to the housekeepers of the village. Sometimes they were remodeled and additions built, especially in the form of larger rooms for group meetings. Thus at Proximity in 1903, at the Asheville Cotton Mills in 1906, and at the Erwin Mills in 1915, a tenement house was used as soon as a worker was engaged. In 1900 the Highland Park Mills in Charlotte set aside a tenement for use by volunteer workers from town. All these were replaced later by community houses built for the purpose. Since 1915 thirteen other mills or groups of mills have turned over tenements for community use. Only one of these has been replaced by a real community house. During this period one mill set aside a large room inside the plant, and three built store blocks with space on the second floor equivalent to a medium-sized community house. Twenty-two community houses were built when the work began and have always constituted regular accommodations for community work in their respective villages. A new method of providing for these

activities was that adopted by five groups of mills, which included in a new school, built entirely or largely by the mill, rooms designed and equipped for community work.

The periods of building or even of equipping tenements for community work naturally coincide with those of the employing of workers. If we add the group of mills at Spray to the companies named above we have the total which were provided with community houses before 1914. All the remainder of the forty-eight were built or set aside by 1920, except one set of community rooms built in a new school in 1926. Instead of additions to the houses since 1920, there have been eighteen cases where the community worker has been discontinued and the house used as a residence, boarding house, or meeting place for casual groups such as parent-teachers' associations. Four other community houses belonging to mills that still employ workers are practically unused because of retrenchment in the program.

It is impossible to secure definite data on the cost of community houses. Apparently this is not because of unwillingness to give out the information but because it is not known. Where existing tenements were used the additional investment might be only a hundred dollars or so for the removal of a partition or the purchase of extremely simple equipment for cooking and sewing classes. From this it ranged all the way up to $5,000 for one remodeled building. Figures are very vague because no welfare accounts are kept separate from those of the village or general expense. In most of the cases where a special building was erected the manager could and would give the cost, but sometimes he did not know, because of a change in management, because he came to his job after the house was built, or for other reasons. The cost of a building varied greatly. A number cost $6,000 or a little more and contain a good-sized room for community meetings and movies and smaller rooms for library, clubs, and classes. There were fifteen of this class, including halls and school additions, serving twenty-three plants. In 1926 five of these were not in use. Others cost from $15,000 to $40,000 and contain the above features on a larger scale as well as a gymnasium and shower baths. There were fifteen of this class serving thirty-six plants. In 1926 four of these were not in use. Others cost from $40,000 to $125,000,

and over, and they contain a swimming pool and the most varied equipment and accommodations on a really handsome scale. There were six such houses among the mills in this study serving ten large plants. In two of these plants the programs in 1926 were much reduced from those that had been planned when the buildings were designed. Except in the extremely simple and extremely elaborate buildings there is, on the whole, not a very close correlation between size of the community house and size of the company: several small mills, have more pretentious community houses than larger units. There is probably a closer correlation between the cost and the time of building. If a house was built in 1916-18 it was likely to be simpler than one built in 1918-20, when the mill was making more money. To compare the actual costs of these would be misleading because of the twofold and threefold advance in building costs.

There are nineteen plants or groups which have, or have had, special workers but have never had any sort of community house. Eight of these workers, strictly visiting nurses, needed no center. The others were welfare workers with some general community duties. All of these used some sort of meeting place, such as the village chapel with rooms attached for their classes, the basement of a church, or a small mill-built schoolhouse, though these makeshifts were usually rather poorly adapted to good work.

COST OF COMMUNITY WORK

There are several other points which should be considered somewhere in a discussion of community work. One of these is its total cost. Again, as with the investment in buildings and every other item about which this subject has come up, we have to plead ignorance for the same reasons: the managers do not know, do not keep separate accounts, are unwilling to guess. A few[1] had exact figures or rough estimates of the total cost of all outside activities, but one included everything, such as housing, another all except housing, and so on. Among them all there was just one company able and willing to tell

[1]See chap. I.

just what its community program cost. In this case it was $10,000 a year, which included interest on the investment, running expenses, salaries, and taxes. The investment had amounted to $75,000 for building, equipment, and grounds for athletics; this item was known because all the money had been spent at one time. Interest came to $4,500. Taxes in that city are 2 per cent on a 50 per cent valuation, making $750. The salary of the woman worker was partly paid by the State Department of Home Economics because a large part of her duties consisted in teaching domestic science. The salary of the director, a trained Y.M.C.A. man, and of a full-time assistant physical director, the running expenses of classes, libraries, a subsidy to the moving pictures, which were given for a nominal admission fee, tennis courts, swimming pool, baseball, basketball, etc., made up the balance of the $10,000. With 750 employees this was about $13.30 per employee per year. If other plants get as much for their money as this, it is likely that there are only about twenty-eight plants centering around eleven community houses which have or have ever had a greater or even an equal expenditure. And one of the largest of this group has abandoned its program entirely, another has retrenched greatly in the last year, and three others are carrying much of theirs into the schools, leaving only six community houses, serving seventeen plants, on so large a scale. All the other community programs discussed are far simpler—a single worker, usually a woman, at $100 to $150 a month, a very modest house, and simple activities requiring small running expenses. In view of these facts it is absurd for the public, or for hostile or favorable critics, to cite too glibly the few examples of large expenditure as typical of textile welfare work in the state.

PROPORTION OF COMMUNITY REACHED

Another point on which data is lacking is the effectiveness of community programs in reaching the people of the village. One community worker and her employer, the manager of the mill, think that, directly or indirectly, the community work touches not only every mill hand but every person in the village. No one else was so optimistic. It was impossible to get

even the numbers attending classes, or the numbers of users of the small libraries, because, except in the very few cases where the community work is conducted through the Y.M.C.A., no records are kept and no reports made. Yet in the dozen or so units which have several workers and a program including nursing, music, athletics, adult education, library, and clubs it is probable that directly almost every family, and directly or indirectly every person, is touched by one or another of these phases of the work. In the plants with a single worker one encounters classes or groups of ten or twenty although the persons eligible to the groups are several times as numerous. For example, in one village a community worker made a special effort to enlist the interest of all mothers with babies under one year of age in a class instructed by a visiting expert. Though all conceded the excellence of the idea it was never possible to secure the attendance of more than twenty-odd of the nearly fifty mothers of such babies in the village. In another village a fairly accurate survey revealed sixty-nine people in the plant who could not read and write. Special personal appeal enlisted fifteen or eighteen in a class; before the twenty-night session was over it had dwindled to six or seven.

It may be replied that one cannot expect everybody to be enlisted in the community program. That would be asking too much of human nature in the persons of the worker and the villagers; but if only one member of a family is enlisted he will take home to all the others something of the spirit of the program. Unfortunately, this argument is not supported by the facts of the distribution of interest. Instead, several members of the same family take a part—the mother in the mother's club, the elder daughter in a social club, the young girls in the cooking class, the boys in the scout troop, and all in the use of the library, while many other families are untouched in any way. This general statement is partially based on observation by the writer and by community worker friends, and partially deduced from comments by mill managers. It may be unjustified, but more accurate information than we now have will be needed to disprove it. And this information would be of great importance to the manager in deciding on an increase or a retrenchment in his community program, and

of equal interest and value to the worker in estimating his or her own effectiveness and new community needs.

RELATION WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Many of the mills with workers of their own are the most enthusiastic coöperators with outside agencies. The reason for this is simple: the community worker, especially if she has general duties, is usually glad to get the service of a specialist in some of her problems. Thus certain workers secure the aid of county or other semi-public nurses for clinics and classes which have a community health value. Some use county home demonstration agents for special courses in dressmaking or canning or cooking; four large groups of mills have full-time domestic science teachers from the State Department of Home Economics. Several secure books from local libraries or borrow one of the state traveling libraries, which thus either forms or supplements their own. Conversely, the outside agencies find it much easier to be of service to the villages where there are community workers. If the latter do not come to them and ask for aid, some at least of the public, semi-public, or volunteer agents go to the workers and offer their service. They can then depend on someone on the ground to take the initiative and to promote and maintain interest. Absence of this local leadership is the reason for the failure of so many volunteer projects, from missions to community "sings." Most plants that have no workers get only spasmodic and occasional aid from outside agencies. A few, however, are availing themselves of fairly continuous programs, especially several mills in Salisbury, where the Y.W.C.A. conducts work for the young women which has extended over several years. With the increase in the number of such public and semi-public agents this kind of coöperation offers increasing oportunities. To the mills it means better service, to the community worker aid in the expansion of his activities, and to the public agents, greater ease of contacts.

CHAPTER VII

ATHLETICS AND RECREATION AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MILL COMMUNITY

Besides the community work discussed in the preceding chapter there are a number of special activities, some of long standing, which may or may not be accompanied by more elaborate programs but which have a distinct community value in themselves. The most important of these are athletics—chiefly baseball—and bands.

ATHLETICS

Aid and encouragement of athletics by the mills is treated here with community work because the social and communal significance of such athletics as found in mill villages is greater than its importance as education. By far the most common form is baseball. There are, among the mills included in this study, 127 which mentioned baseball specifically among their various outside activities. Most mills take for granted assistance to baseball teams. Almost every man interviewed had to be asked specifically about it and then usually said, "Oh, yes. Of course we help the baseball team. I guess you find that nearly all mills do." But for reasons already made clear,[1] it is very likely that there is aid given to teams by mills whose executives did not mention it and were not specifically asked. The writer has carefully considered each mill which is not noted as aiding baseball from the point of view of size, location, general policy in other community matters, relations with its employees, and the custom of other mills in the neighborhood or under related managements. This examination shows eighty-eight others which, it is more likely than not, assist baseball teams. If this estimate is not too high, there are over two-thirds of the plants in this study which aid this form of

[1]See chap. I.

athletics. Obviously, for purposes of classification and description, only the 127 can be used.

Of these 127, there are twenty-one plants where aid to the baseball team seems to be the only activity having a general community significance. They may have other outside activities in plenty, but these relate to housing, night schools, stores, churches, hospital cases, or loans, and hence are described elsewhere. There are twenty-eight plants aiding ball teams which support other odd bits of community work, such as bands, community clubs, playgrounds, boy scouts, and coöperation with county or city or other industries in the support of a welfare worker or volunteer work. Finally, there are seventy-eight plants aiding baseball that have, or have recently had, some sort of worker employed to lead their community work. This classification is not meant to indicate any special relation between the community workers and this particular form of outside activity. Rather the two sorts of activity are results of the same condition: the mills in the first group are rather small and mostly single plants, many having fewer than a hundred workers, and all except four having fewer than two hundred; those in the second group average slightly larger and include several chains of mills; those in the third group include all the larger mills or chains of mills. Naturally, it is the larger plants which undertake many forms of community activity and can afford to have full-time workers.

It is not likely that the presence of a community worker has much to do with the existence of the ball team. In some cases these workers do encourage baseball and help to form leagues and arrange games, but even in these cases the teams played long before the worker was employed. The "boys" in the mill get up their own team and come to the office for aid. There were few indications of the initiative coming from anybody except from the young men who want to play, though the writer guesses, from acquaintance with mill life, that the first suggestion may often come from the superintendent and certainly from foremen. There was only one mill where the initiative seems to have come entirely from the chief executive. This was an old, run-down mill which had recently come into the hands of a man plainly eager to build up a better village and a more interested working force.

Aid to ball teams has been the custom for at least three decades. Managers of mills started in the nineties said that the plant had always helped the teams, and some managers of mills founded still earlier said the same thing. There is no means of setting a date for the beginning of this custom, but it is unlikely that the boys of the country families that were flocking to the mills in such large numbers were baseball enthusiasts earlier than the nineties.

Prior to about 1915 aid usually meant the furnishing of baseballs and bats, with probably some assistance in traveling to neighboring mills and towns for games. About that time, or in many cases later, uniforms became part of the equipment considered necessary by a live team, and the mills helped in purchasing these, giving most commonly about 50 per cent of their cost. Little leagues became active during and after the war, and they of course made uniforms necessary. Until recently the players usually contented themselves with a diamond located on some vacant land belonging to the mill and close to the village. With the formation of better teams and leagues, some plants have built grandstands and even fenced the fields. This has represented a considerable outlay, which in some cases means more expense each year in up-keep. In others it means that the team can charge admission and thus make their own money for equipment and trips. Several managers who have laid out parks added that they limit the admission fees sharply—say to ten or fifteen cents—so that all the community can enjoy the games. And in many villages baseball does provide one of the chief means of recreation during the summer months, especially for the men and younger people. In many cases it is a source of considerable plant and village pride. The villagers patronize suppers and stunts put on by the ball team to raise their share of the expenses left by the mill for them to pay; organized groups such as clubs or classes even put on suppers to "help the ball boys."

This spirit seems to persist even in plants where the company hires certain mill hands chiefly because they are good ball players. Of course part of the community value of having local youths on the team is then sacrificed to the winning of games. A few years ago, until the managers changed their policy, advertisements in the textile papers frequently con-

tained the note that a mill wanted an operative who could play ball, or a man offered himself as a beamer, for example, and a ball player. Usually a foreman who is interested in baseball or who can be persuaded by members of the team to hire a man able to help them, represents the only part the management plays in thus building up or strengthening a team with outsiders. Sometimes this interest goes as far as the superintendent; it necessarily does if the player-operative has to be given a wage higher than the scale for his particular occupation, a custom that is, incidentally, fairly common. Such an increase in wages may, if the mill is small, have to be approved even by the head executive.

This custom has its disadvantages in other respects besides a lowering of community standards. One manager complained that "these fellows that play ball think that they can run about from mill to mill and take the pick of the jobs at better wages than the others." He thought them a poor type of worker. He has stopped helping ball teams directly with money and indirectly with players because it disorganized the mill. At an isolated mill another team, after years of using only local boys, joined a league with several other towns. The mill furnished the uniforms and equipment and the necessary money. It had to hire operatives who could play ball, since the league required that each player be a mill worker. As a matter of fact, "they just hung around, working enough to fulfill the technicality," and the cost was rather heavy. The whole plan fell through because the team met towns too large for them "one of the big ones had the umpire," and most of the games were played away from home. A few other executives suggested similar disasters, but in general the men interviewed either take the need of aid for teams so much for granted that such experiences do not trouble them, or they are helping because they are interested personally as well as because they wish to promote plant and village morale.

The experiences of plants with ball teams show great variety. At one extreme is a very small plant that has helped teams "off and on, but they never amounted to much," and another that tried quite vigorously four years ago to organize a team, which lasted for only three years. A third stopped aiding ball teams because it took too much of the superintendent's time,

since he was always going with them on trips. The manager of two new mills discontinued aid after three years because "everybody got more interested in ball than they were in the business. They would close down the mill for the afternoon and everybody go to the games of the little league. Now 'the boys' have a team just to play among themselves, and the men in the office contribute to it personally." Another manager made a complaint in which many probably could have joined: "Oh, yes, we have to get new uniforms and equipment every year—they never save anything and carry it over." And still another: "You can depend on it that they will call on the mill to help—always do when they start anything." Little better was the feeling of the manager who said that they had been nursing a team along for years, and now it was a part of the little local league.

All the other executives told of their teams with pride. One of the few instances in which the writer encountered the *my* so often attributed to mill owners was in connection with ball teams. The manager of a group of mills located close enough together for two or three to combine on teams waxed more enthusiastic over this topic than over all his accomplishments with a fairly elaborate welfare scheme. "I have three ball teams, and they are live affairs. The company furnishes balls, bats, and uniforms. I meet with them every once in a while and make them a little talk on keeping the sporting spirit in the play—not to get too anxious to win, but play for the sake of playing. My boys are inclined to get too enthusiastic about winning." The owner of a small mill in very hilly country spent a thousand dollars in grading a ball field. He is very proud of the village interest in the game.

One large company that has always helped and encouraged the workers to have a team was asked in 1920 to go further and put up a fence so that they could collect an admission fee. "*Every spring* they want equipment and suits—won't take care of them—and let the people tear down the fence for kindling, and then want the mill to mend it. It is discouraging." And this man sounded discouraged—not disgusted or angry, but just discouraged—for he has tried many things. Quite different is the experience of a small plant on this point, and a rather valuable experience it is. The ball team here is of long

standing and has stood high in the locality and its little leagues, so that it is a source of pride to the village and the manager-owner. The "boys" get up the team and manage its organization entirely. The mill leases them the ground for a field at a dollar a year and a few years ago lent them $400 to build a fence around it, which was to be repaid gradually out of the gate receipts. Each year, after the team has been organized and has collected as much money as it can for equipment, a representative asks the manager-owner what the mill will contribute for that year. Usually he gives $75, which does not have to be repaid. The manager was particularly interested in the experiment of the fence. "If the mill had built that fence, it would have been carried away a plank at a time for fire wood. The other day one of the ball players came in and said that somebody was taking off boards, and he wanted us to find out who was doing it. I told him to keep a lookout. A few hours later he came in with two urchins by the ears, wanting them arrested."

In several plants that are in or close to small towns the young men who wish to play ball combine with the town players. These teams also apply to the mill for aid—and get it. In fact, there was just one plant among all those visited where the manager spoke of a ball team which completely financed itself. Aid is extended by small mills as well as large—some having fewer than a hundred employees—and by some of the oldest in the state. Baseball is by far the most common form of athletics. At only forty-two plants were others mentioned. If provision is made for anything besides baseball the program usually includes several basketball and volley ball teams, with shooting galleries and swimming pools in several instances. There are nineteen plants supporting eight Y.M.C.A.'s which have fairly elaborate athletic programs. Three plants have similar athletics directed by a town "Y" or a town play association. A few contribute to city Y.M.C.A.'s and send their young men and boys to the central "Y" for games. There are several cases in which athletic associations or groups are made up of the villagers, usually the men, who manage all activities. Each of these associations was described by the mill manager as being a live and interested group. They are all fairly new and represent experiments in employee initiation and manage-

ment that are going on in various lines of community life. On the whole, while there are many mills which spend money and some energy and interest on athletics, the chief value is probably derived from the team spirit and community spirit as aroused by baseball. Merely from the point of view of physical training all these things touch a very small number of people in any village, except for the two dozen mills or so which have fairly comprehensive programs. But baseball, besides being played by more individuals than most other games, is almost everywhere a source of friendly and contagious enthusiasm.

BANDS

Mill bands are similar to ball teams in many respects, though they are far fewer and are less often initiated by the workers. The main reason for these differences, no doubt, is that a band requires a greater outlay of money for instruments and for running expenses, teachers, and music. Besides, a band requires longer and more sustained effort to render it enjoyable to the players or to the community. Thus it is peculiarly susceptible to the ravages of one of the chief diseases of the mill village—mobility. For these reasons out of thirty-five bands at fifty-six plants (some being groups of mills combining for a band) all except those started most recently, and some even of these, have died down and been revived. Sixteen were either completely dormant or quiescent at the time of the survey for this study, leaving nineteen actually in operation. Thirteen of these were at mills having fairly elaborate welfare schemes, while only three bands had been abandoned at this type of mill, two of which were merely quiescent and would doubtless be revived. Out of nine that had been organized at mills which have had other welfare work and abandoned it, only three bands have survived the failure of the other work. Three bands were active at mills which do no other definite community work except giving aid to baseball, but only one of these was very vigorous.

The most common method of procedure in organizing a band is that some person connected with the management arouses interest among possible players and arranges that the company buy the instruments. These are sometimes sold to the

players, who are allowed to pay a little for them each week. Sometimes the mill retains the ownership of the instruments because the men do not like to put their money into them, since they might move to a mill that has no band. Still others sell to those players who wish to buy and let others use the mill-owned instruments. There was even an instance or two of selling them and afterwards buying them back, letting the men continue to use them. The most common way of providing a teacher is to secure a man from the mill who can instruct the band. Usually such men are fairly skilled, often foremen or at least fixers. They are paid extra for their outside duties with the band. In a few cases all players in the band are paid extra as well as given free instruction. In a few, however, the members pay a small part of the cost of instruction or buy the music.

The oldest band discovered among the mills in this state was one at Randleman, started forty years ago. The mill bought the instruments and paid a band teacher. In this case men from out of town were usually the teachers, and not mill workers as is now common. Later the players began to help in paying the teacher's salary. Finally, the mill stopped buying the instruments because the players moved often and took them away. So many were thus lost that it was decided to let each player buy his own. This was a good band and was in demand for concerts and public gatherings in surrounding towns as well as at home. The manager thinks that interest declined somewhat because of phonographs and later radios, and the band has not been active in recent years. The next oldest was not far away, at the Columbia Manufacturing Company at Ramseur. Mr. Watkins, the former owner, started the band there about 1890. "He was more interested in this than in anything about the mill and village except the church." The band members paid a little for instruction, the mill paying the balance. This band appears to have done much for the community in its fifteen years of active existence. Music instruction is now connected with the school. Washington Mills at Mayodan started a band in 1897. Of all the early bands this was probably most nearly a volunteer and an employee-initiated organization. While its activity has been irregular it has never long remained dormant. During these thirty years the

mill's only official relation to it has been to lend money to the individual player to buy his instrument and let him repay it gradually.

The history of the band at Spray shows the longest and most consistent development of any musical venture in the state. There was a band here as early as 1898, for which the players "chipped in" and paid a part-time band leader, a man who was already employed in the mill. It has been active, though somewhat spasmodically, ever since, and by 1908 was of high enough quality to win a prize at a contest in Charlotte. In 1918 the Carolina Cotton and Woolen Mills Company employed a full-time music director and in 1922 added an assistant. They give group instruction to bands and orchestras and class instruction in violin, piano, and other instruments. At present there are over three hundred people in the various classes. These directors, using local talent from their classes, have each year conducted a music week or festival which has become a sort of musical chautauqua.

There were a few bands, thirteen in all, started between 1900 and the boom years of the war; five of these have now died out. The band at Proximity figures largely in accounts of the annual mill picnic from 1905 on. That at Cliffside is still vigorous after twenty years. The band at Revolution was started in 1915 and ran for two or three years. There have been suggestions in recent years of reviving it on the same basis as before, but as everybody remembers the earlier experience this seems to foreshadow only another failure. Instead the subject of community music is being approached through the schools. The music teacher tries to keep a hold on the boys and girls by having them continue to play in the school orchestra or band after they have stopped school. In this way there are hopes of building up a group who will know more music than the average men picked up in the mill, who will have been continuously interested in it, and who come from the more permanent type of mill family. Bands were started at Roanoke Rapids and Rosemary some ten years ago. The mills bought the instruments at first, but so much interest has now developed that the players buy their own. The members of the band work in the mill, but they are paid extra for playing in the band. The instructor is the head of the music de-

partment in the schools and has an additional salary for instructing the mill bands. These schools have excellent music departments and in 1925 won the cup for the best band in the state contest at Greensboro.

More bands were started about 1916 than at any other time, and more of them have been abandoned. Those at Henrietta and Caroleen are considered assets to the life of the village. Quite the opposite has been the experience of the Mooresville mill, where the playing has gone on rather irregularly. "Not much to it. We bought the instruments, hired the instructor, and they wanted us to pay them for playing! Wanted all sorts of concessions, such as being let out of the mill at odd times to play at public affairs. This got to be an inconvenience, and it rather upset the morale of the rest of the force to see the band men getting favors. We had the idea that a band would make the people happier and give them entertainment. It did not have the effect that was expected."

Besides mobility, the chief cause of disruption in bands, the other main reasons for their irregularity or failure seem to be lack of leadership and internal dissension. Several managers, however, were discouraged because the bands "just died out."

It is probable that in proportion to the numbers of bands and ball teams the former reach more individuals directly, give more pleasure to the whole village, and serve its community life better. Except for the bandmaster there is less hiring of men merely for their ability to play, so that a band is more nearly a community product. The bands are in great demand for all sorts of community festivities, school "breakings," Sunday concerts in the "hall," or whatever answers for a park. The writer has seen villagers flock to hear the band practise in such large numbers that the doors had to be closed to visitors. In some villages the bands touch directly only a dozen or so people; in others, as at Spray, they reach hundreds directly and thousands indirectly. In every case where the band is at all a success it is recognized by the management as a valuable contribution to community and mill spirit.

BOY SCOUT TROOPS

Besides baseball and bands there are many other efforts at community work of which a few instances, or it may be only one, are to be found. Perhaps the most frequently mentioned is the aid and encouragement of boy scout troops. This is quite natural because of the needs of mill village boys for this sort of leadership and instruction. Most of their homes are average or below average economically; many are distinctly underprivileged. There are few books, little money for hobbies, and, until a boy is old enough to work, practically nothing except school to keep him occupied. Even after he is fourteen he may not be able to get a job, and after he does there are his leisure hours to be filled, including, in the case of doffers, many spare moments in the mill. This fact used to be made much of in the defense of the mills for employing children. Since the working age has been raised to fourteen, doffers have gradually come to be larger boys. Being stronger they are able to work faster on the spurts that are necessary at doffing time, so that fewer are needed. But full utilization of all the spinning frames and of the spinners' time still makes it necessary to have more doffers than can be kept at work continuously. The writer can testify, from personal observations over days and weeks in the same spinning rooms, that these boys have considerable spare time in the mill which they spend in groups in bobbin or quill room or about the bins. In good weather, and in mills which allow it, they roll about or play on the grass outside the door, depending on a good-natured spinner or supervisor to call them in when their frames are ready to doff. These leisure hours in the mill, with the exchanging of experiences and gambling—rook or even craps when the supervisors are out of sight—added to the leisure hours outside with the same diversions, constitute in many villages a real problem.

It is a problem which many managers feel can best be met by boy scout troops. But such troops have had checkered careers. Started by some man about the mill either because he was enthusiastic himself or was urged by the manager, they might fail because he proved a poor leader or lost his interest. After several brisk starts and slow, deadening failures, a troop

becomes very hard to start again under the repeated reminders that it cannot succeed. Some forty plants gave aid, usually both in money and in leadership, for scout troops. The trend toward outside direction of this activity is strong. Several managers mentioned early troops led by men in the mill or the office and added that they now contribute to the town fund for boy scouts to secure the leadership of the town scout master. In addition to these cases there have been inaugurated in recent years several county or inter-county scout programs, with a scout executive who promotes, encourages, supervises, and coördinates the work of troops and local leaders all over his district. Gaston County has such a supervisor, and several counties including Alamance and Rockingham combine in employing one. Theoretically, the boys of Gaston's one hundred mills and of the almost equal number in the latter group of counties should have a good opportunity to join scout troops, but all of them will not actually have one until every center in these counties has been reached by the organizers. Whether the mill village is organized first of all or last of all depends largely upon the interest of some person in the village, usually a man with information about the possibility of organization, appreciation of local needs, and enough influence to secure the needed funds. As this combination is rarely found except among the management, after all even this utilization of a semi-public agent depends on its members.

SPECIAL GROUPS OF COMMUNITY SIGNIFICANCE

Besides all the numerous kinds of classes, clubs, bands, and other groups mentioned in this and the preceding chapter, there are two other types of organization which have a community bearing. On neither of these types does this study include any very definite data. They should perhaps be mentioned, however, along with other forces of community significance. One of these is the new employee-operated club, which has become more common in recent years; the other is the lodge or fraternal order.

The first of these is usually initiated by the welfare worker or by some member of the management. After this it runs itself with a minimum of encouragement and aid. Sometimes

the aid is financial; sometimes it consists in "just showing interest by coming to the meetings once in a while"; sometimes it consists in a little guidance and advice. In the course of securing the data for this study a dozen or so managers were encountered who referred, usually with considerable pride, to some organization run and sometimes initiated by the villagers. More often than not it was an athletic club, in one or two cases a sort of community club, and in one case an organization which started as an athletic club but which had taken on many of the social and other features of the "service clubs." This sort of development is still in its beginnings; in fact, some of the welfare and community workers are just beginning to wake up to this means of ultimately multiplying their effectiveness.

A discussion of fraternal orders and lodges hardly belongs in a study of welfare work by the mills. The chief reason for including them even briefly is to round out the roster of community agencies in the mill village. These organizations are numerous in most villages of any size and are usually rather active. The Junior Order of United American Mechanics, Woodmen of the World, and Redmen are especially frequent. The chief aid which the mill company extends to these orders is in supplying, rent free, a hall for their meetings. Usually all the orders in a village use it, alternating the nights of meeting. The writer has, in a limited observation on this point, known several managers and superintendents who, as one of them put it, "joined because the boys got after me to, and I did it to sort of encourage them." Lodge membership includes most of the foremen and the most skilled men such as fixers and mechanics. This is probably because they can better afford to belong and because the insurance features appeal to this class. At any rate, a selective process goes on, which results in the lodges' including in their membership most of the village leaders, and membership carries with it a vague enhancement of one's standing.

This mention of a man's social standing may present a new idea to many people who think of the mill village as a dead level of something worse than mediocrity. Nothing could be further from the truth. This fact is brought out by J. J. Rhyne in an unpublished study of mill village families. Suffice

it to say here that the mill village has as many gradations as any small town and that they are based on exactly the same things—economic standing, general decency, and personal leadership. If anything, the lines are more sharply drawn. For everybody knows about how much money everybody else makes, and a man can easily compare his own work and the reward he gets for it with that of a foreman or a superintendent. Everyone has daily and visible proof of the authority of the supervising and managing groups. Everyone has daily and visible evidence and unquestioned proof of the difference in standing revealed by the very looks and furnishings of the "bossmen's" houses. All the way down the line this difference of position is felt. Other things being equal, a girl who weaves holds herself above one who spins; a man who fixes looms, above a card hand; and so on. And also, other things being equal, a family that is self-respecting and decent and clean stands higher than a family that is content to live on "back street" or "way down at the end of the row" or in the "hollow" and allow the house and children and premises to remain dirty.

These lines are clear-cut enough at any one time, but they are not so inelastic over a period of years as in the average small town. They are too closely bound up with the mill hierarchy for that. A promotion may mean the better pay, the higher position, and the better house that carry the whole family higher in the scale. But the distinctions exist in a form definite enough to be of importance to the community worker, and it is a wise worker who understands and takes into account this very natural social phenomenon.

CHAPTER VIII

HEALTH WORK IN THE MILL VILLAGE

Health work of various kinds has long been a popular form of activity for industrial plants. This has included company doctors, nurses, health education, and aid and advice in the care of the sick and of babies. In many sections of the country and in most industries the work was started inside the plant and varied in extent from the simplest first aid station to elaborate hospital schemes. Later and by degrees it began to be applied to the families of workers and carried into the homes.

In the textile industry, on the other hand, it started in the homes and villages, and only gradually, as liability laws, compensation, and insurance have grown up, has it gone into the plant in any but the most elementary form of first aid. Indeed, in the South and in North Carolina anything more than this in the plant is still very unusual. All mills have some such equipment, and all have arrangements with doctors for special and speedy aid in case of accidents. Some of the larger plants pay a regular salary to a local doctor for such services. A few cases of more elaborate work inside the plant will be mentioned in connection with the outside and village health programs of these same plants.

It is in the homes of the workers and in the village as a whole that most of the health work of the textile plant has been carried on. Forerunners of it will be noted later in our consideration of the early history of welfare work.[1] Some of the first mill welfare work in England included a company doctor for service to all the people of the village. Just as early were the efforts to maintain certain sanitary standards, such as Robert Owen's visiting committees, which survive, in almost all Southern mill villages, in the periodical inspection of houses and premises by a representative of the mill. Both

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[1]See chap. XVI.

lines of development are natural outgrowths of a paternalistic village community system.

As in the case of some of the other outside activities, the story of health work has not been characterized by any broad path of development, but rather consists of a collection of individual mill and village histories. While they can hardly be profitably classified into periods of chronological sequence, they seem at least to fall into groups characterized by different ways of doing health work. In the plants included in this study at which any mention was made of health work the following classes can be distinguished: first, regular village sanitation and house inspection; second, plants in which the management encourages, and is aware of, the local work of public and semi-public agencies such as city and county nurses and doctors, Red Cross workers of various kinds, and Metropolitan[2] nurses; third, schemes in which several or all the industrial plants of a town contribute to the salary of a nurse to serve all their employees; fourth, mills having general welfare workers who have emphasized certain health matters; fifth, plants which have fairly well-defined health programs. For purposes of summary and counting, all these groups except the first have been treated as if they are mutually exclusive. As a matter of fact many belong partly to more than one group.

REGULAR VILLAGE SANITATION AND HOUSE INSPECTION

Although specific questions on this point were not asked at every plant visited, it is probably safe to say that every mill which provides company houses has some arrangements for village sanitation and house inspection. Many executives emphasized their water supply. In villages without running water this is usually managed by boring deep wells, each to serve four to eight or ten houses, which are operated by a hand pump. In villages with running water it is invariably pumped from a central deep well. A number of managers stated with some pride that the water had been analyzed by the State

[2]Nurses supported by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company for visiting holders of industrial policies in that company.

Department of Health and found good. A few have an analysis made periodically; in most cases this is done only when a new system is installed or new wells are bored. One village located in a narrow valley along a stream flanked by high hills uses mostly the several springs near by, preferring their water to that from the deep wells. The manager said there was never any typhoid to speak of. Not a single mill reported a filter plant and the use of water from streams.

In villages which have no sewerage system the state requires a certain type of toilet and inspects them at intervals. The mill installs them, keeps them in order, and periodically cleans them. Several managers have worked out methods of deodorizing, disinfecting, and cleaning, of which they are quite proud. There are as many managers whose hobby is clean toilets, both in the mill and the village, as there are whose hobby is good drinking water or schools or dwellings or community work. In some cases the mill care of toilets continues after the village is incorporated or is taken into town limits, usually with some sort of finanical arrangement between the mill and the town. For it is by no means universal for the town sewerage system to be extended to the village when it becomes a part of the town.

The mill families, still close to their rural background, are fond of keeping a pig or two. When the location of the mill with respect to town limits permits, they are allowed to build pig pens in an outlying section of the village which has an appropriate slope. One manager is of the opinion that pigs were banished from near the houses in mill villages long before they were in other villages of similar size. Certainly this was true in his village and the neighboring town. Perhaps this was because such a matter in the mill villages was under the control of a single man and did not have to wait until public opinion had reached the point of demanding action.

Mill managements are of course responsible for general drainage arrangements, and part of the duties of the "outside hands" have to do with keeping ditches clean and outlets clear. The mills vary in the adequacy of their original grading and of ditching and drainage systems and upkeep about as much as they vary in their general upkeep of the village. A few managers told of a regular garbage, refuse, and rubbish collection.

There are very few villages which have such collection often enough to be of any use in garbage disposal, only two or three mentioning collections as often as once a week. Many villagers solve the problem by keeping a pig or two, or by giving, in some cases selling, their "slops" to a neighbor for his pigs. More mills provide periodical—monthly or semi-yearly—collections of rubbish, at which times the villagers are urged to clean up and to gather all tin cans and litter to be hauled off. The presence or absence of such collections is rather apparent, as will be shown in our descriptions of villages in the chapter on housing.

House inspection seems to concern itself more with the immediate premises than with the interior, though the latter is given a cursory, and in some villages a fairly careful, inspection. It certainly varies greatly in effectiveness, as is perfectly patent to the most casual observer. The inspector is most frequently the "outside overseer" or his second hand; sometimes he is the special health worker; in at least one place and probably in others he is the village policeman; in still another, a new spick-and-span village, he is the head of the mills himself. Several managers commented in particular on the strictness of the current inspection.

PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC HEALTH WORK

In North Carolina public interest in health has been a recent development. While county doctors date from 1879, their chief duties were long confined to prisoners and paupers. Somewhat later, vaccinations by county doctors became common. The war, with the accompanying influenza epidemic and the appeal of the Red Cross for general health as a national duty in time of war, made public health programs popular. County and city doctors found the possibilities for work broadening, and conversely counties and cities began to seek doctors willing and able to inaugurate programs that would reach more needs. Red Cross nurses, eager to put their work on a permanent basis, sought opportunities for service and funds for support. The influenza epidemic afforded an opportunity for coöperation with many mills, and some plants had their first touch with public health work at that time. With some it had

no permanent effects. For instance, four executives who said that they had a nurse and a temporary hospital during the epidemic had had no definite health work before, nor have they had since. But there were, as will be noted later, more mills which employed a nurse for that emergency and continued her for some years, perhaps up to the present.

In six cases mill executives who were interviewed mentioned that their villagers have the services of city nurses for visiting only; apparently health classes and group work have never been undertaken. In thirteen plants county health officers—nurses and doctors—seem to be fairly active. In six mills their work is largely limited to vaccination for smallpox, innoculation for typhoid, and visiting special cases of tuberculosis. One very large village belonging to two plants had classes in nursing and first aid supported by the county as part of a state program three or four years ago. The mill encouraged them by providing a house for meeting and by urging the women and girls to attend, which they did—"good-sized classes." They have not been repeated, however. Two other plants had the services of a county nurse for three years, and this officer "did a good deal of work here. She had some classes in hygiene and baby care and diet for babies, and did a lot of good." The county discontinued the nurse in 1925. Two other mills have furnished, for some ten years, a house for volunteer welfare work undertaken by ladies from the adjoining town, who included a class in home nursing in their program; when the county employed a nurse four or five years ago she took over and continued the nursing class. In the same county the manager of another mill said that the county nurse's work is limited in their village to visiting and to a yearly tuberculosis clinic.

Work by county agents has been received with various sentiments. Some mill managers have taken it as a matter of course; two or three referred with some pride to the coöperation that has been set up; in three localities citizens commended the county work and lamented the fact that the wide duties of nurse and doctor do not allow for more time and work in the mill villages; three executives explained that they get service only on the most pressing matters because they are located in a corner of the county away from the county seat where

the officers seem to concentrate their efforts. As one expressed it rather feelingly, "We are the stepchildren of the county down here, for the workers [health and other officers] like to stay up at the county seat." On the other hand, one city Red Cross worker said that she was not allowed to carry on any work in the adjoining mill village—that she was politely but firmly told that they "took care of their people."

In addition to the villages served by county and city nurses there were, among the mills included in this study, eleven cases of coöperation with the Red Cross. In five of them it appears to be more or less perfunctory—the giving of money by the mill, and in return, and in special cases, some little visiting by the Red Cross nurse. In four villages belonging to a group of mills the relation seems to have been close and friendly since February, 1923. The nurses who have successively held this job have been tactful and able; they have been welcomed by the villagers and have worked in excellent coöperation with the superintendents. A separate mill in the neighborhood, not quite so conveniently situated, contributes to the maintenance of the same Red Cross nurse that serves the four villages mentioned above. The manager there explained that "she visits in this community when necessary" and that she had held classes in baby care and home nursing in the town, but none of the women from their village ever attended. Apparently few from the four villages where she did more work attended these town classes either, for if many had done so the manager would surely have known about them. In another case, coöperation has gone on since 1921 and has been more extended. The mill in this case contributes largely to the salary of the nurse, who serves the town and even to some extent the county. She does the necessary visiting in the village, holds baby clinics, and has had a series of classes in care of the sick. One nurse on this particular job also had classes in cooking and housekeeping from the point of view of health. One such class was so successful that it was described in the *Red Cross Magazine*, and the nurse took the girls and women to Raleigh for a demonstration. This class was held during working hours and on company time for girls and women who worked in the mill.

There are many plants in counties that have county nurses and also some plants in towns that have town nurses, where

the managers did not mention any work by these officers in the villages; so that if they did any there it was without the knowledge and interest of the mill managements. Whenever a mill has asked the nurse or doctor to come to its aid the executive interviewed would be likely to know of it; when the health agents have asked to do certain work in the mill village he should know of that, too. It is probable that they have done very little when he knows of nothing; certainly it is very unlikely that they have ever done any group teaching—perhaps merely some visiting. Side lights from interviews with managers and conversations with nurses indicate many reasons for this scanty work in the villages. Sometimes it is because the nurse's efforts have to be spread so thinly over an entire city or county that she has little time for any one part of her territory. Sometimes it is because she has felt that other people needed her services more, since the mill management could be relied upon to "take care of the employees." Sometimes, no doubt, it is because she has not been made to feel welcome by the mill management—for the mill village of course is private property. And some mills quite plainly prefer to carry on such things themselves, though many others appreciate and encourage the coöperation of the public and semi-public nurses; and still others resent what they consider a tendency on the part of the nurse to neglect the mill village, "for after all, we pay taxes just as everybody else does."

COÖPERATIVE HEALTH PROGRAMS

Besides these comparatively few plants which described aid in health work from public officers and sources, there are others which support health work on a group basis. Simplest in its administration is the nursing service secured with Metropolitan group insurance. Ten plants having this insurance are large enough, or are near enough to other mills or to towns, to enable the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to put a full-time nurse in the field. So far as could be discovered, this work has been limited to visiting service. In several towns instances were found of group support of a nurse by mills alone or by industrial plants and private subscription. The service was often furnished to many plants not included in this study

—mills and other sorts of industrial concerns. Four mills included in this study reported such coöperative support by other plants of the same town. It was also limited to visiting nursing. A large knitting mill has such a visiting nurse supported by various local industries, individuals, and one of the men's service clubs. This nurse, a particularly energetic person, apparently does a good deal of case work and much adjusting of family and economic difficulties, in addition to visiting the sick. In Lincolnton the Rotary Club, and especially some of its mill members, led a movement about 1922 to engage a visiting nurse for the county and town as a demonstration, in the hope that the county would take up the work and make it permanent. The mills of the town paid half her salary, the remainder being raised by private subscription. The plan was discontinued after three years because the county did not see fit to keep it up, and the people who had been paying for it thought the demonstration had gone on long enough. One probable reason the county did not continue it was that one of the three nurses successively on the job had antagonized people, and many thoughtlessly considered the project a failure owing solely to her unfortunate manner.

In the coöperative program of individuals, industries, and associated charities for maintaining a welfare worker in Lenoir, the first worker employed emphasized religious activities; the present one, who has been there since about 1918, has emphasized health and sanitation. Several mills near Gastonia coöperated in 1923 for about a year in employing a visiting nurse. "That was when times were better; cannot afford it now [August, 1926]." The men who told of the project thought it was a good thing. One of the most interesting contributing plans for nursing service is carried on by the mills of Concord, five of which are included in this study. One or two of the large mills of the town employed company nurses about 1917, but without success. As a mill worker, a woman of unusual balance and common sense, explained, "the nurses just thought because they had the authority of the mill behind them they could make the people do anything they said. Instead of trying to teach the women better care of babies and of the sick they would order them to do this way and that. They made everybody so mad and got so unpopular that many people

would slam doors in their faces and refuse to let them come in the house." In 1921 the county engaged a nurse. She served the industrial sections as much as possible, but, having to spread her efforts over the whole county she could of course, give none too much attention to any one group. In 1923 the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and the mills of the town employed an industrial nurse for the town alone. The Metropolitan pays $840, and the mills contribute on a spindle, or an equivalent, basis to make up the balance, which amounts to $1,200. The nurse devotes her time to visiting and instruction in Concord, and has thus relieved the county nurse of industrial work there; so that the latter has more time for the other mill villages of the county. But even so there is still too much industrial work for the county nurse to do properly if she is to serve the rural districts and other parts of towns as well. The county doctor at the time of the interview was glad to report that an arrangement between the mills and the insurance company was to be made for Kannapolis as well as for Concord. In addition to these officers the Red Cross of the county maintains a special tuberculosis nurse who serves the entire county. For the last two years the nurses have conducted classes for women in the general care of the sick in Kannapolis, Concord, and at one of the suburban mills. The county physician, Dr. Buchanan, did not know how many were in the classes but said that the nurses considered them successful. In an effort to make them as practical as possible, the nurses took for their subjects of instruction problems suggested by questions propounded to the county health office by the people of the very communities in which the classes were held.

The remarkable thing about this particular nursing program is that it is centralized under the county health department. Thus there is less overlapping; there is coöperation and unified direction. The county health department has adopted what is called the general nursing plan, rather than the special nursing plan according to which each nurse advises or aids only in cases for which she is specially trained. The latter is a waste of money and effort, the doctor explained, because you may very easily have two or three nurses in the same part of the county on a single day. It is even more wasteful of

good will because of the psychology of the situation: if the tuberculosis nurse who is visiting a family is asked about some other health problem in the family and she explains that that is not her business but that she will send another—and a strange—nurse to deal with it, the confidence of that family is gone and the contact endangered, especially as she is dealing largely with ignorant people. However, if the new problem involves continuous visits she can often tactfully prepare the way for the proper nurse. Dr. Buchanan considers that one of the main elements of success in public health nursing is the maintaining of friendly contacts, and he tries to work out his program of visiting and service to promote and to preserve them. In 1925 the nurses made 2,500 visits to families. Usually the family calls up the county health office; the mills may call, and do so, but rather rarely.

The writer, gathering from other interviews that this centralizing scheme was considered something of a triumph, inquired in some detail about the causes and consequences of such an unusual centralization, under public officials, of nurses supported by so many different agencies. Dr. Buchanan said of course it was to avoid duplication of effort, but also to "prevent feeling" among the industrial people, that the mills were doing it. In fact the mill Metropolitan nurse had been on duty for about a year before the people in general knew that the mills had any part in her support. His explanation of their thus hiding their light under a bushel verified and amplified the story of the mill operative about the earlier mill nurses: "They ran away with themselves—tried to push things too much. Sort of felt that because they had the mill behind them the mill would stand for discipline—that they could say now 'you've got to do this or that.' The experiment was more than any ordinary failure—got so that some of them just could not go to some of the houses, for the people would not let them in." For this reason the county scheme has had to move very slowly and be managed with velvet gloves, and one of the greatest cares has been to employ nurses who could approach people tactfully.

Naturally Dr. Buchanan thinks it is much better to carry on such work through the public agencies: that it can be better centralized; that the people will use the service more; that

they will not resent it as a substitute for higher wages; and after all that it is really public work and should be done through the public agencies. This was certainly a rather formidable group of reasons. There seems to be one disadvantage: "You know how it is when you begin to have a sufficient staff to do the work properly. The people begin to talk about the expense—that it is making taxes high," so that he is not going as fast as the work and the contacts really warrant. The irony of the situation is that the county is not paying for all this, but since each nurse is sent out from the county health office and is called a county nurse the county gets the credit for her work and the handicap noted above that goes along with it!

HEALTH WORK OF GENERAL COMMUNITY WORKERS

As has already been mentioned in the discussion of general community work and workers, the "welfare worker" includes in her program some health measure: visiting the sick, giving aid and advice in their care, and even conducting health classes. Probably much more of this is done than the manager is aware of. Personal experience of the writer and that of acquaintances in welfare work show that the new community worker can best get an entrée into homes and into the confidence of the villagers through the sick room. Sickness in the family offers an obvious opportunity for visiting and service and for the later enlisting of the family in a community program. In most mills employing a general welfare worker, the man interviewed, though usually knowing not a great deal about the work that the worker was carrying on, always included visiting the sick and other attention to health and sanitation in his rather sketchy list of her duties. In a few plants, however, the health work was prominent, and the executive was sufficiently interested in it to encourage these activities, or at least to inform himself of them in some detail.

One of the earliest examples of a general worker who emphasized health was at the Asheville Cotton Mills twenty years ago. Another mill employed in 1916, and retained for four years, a worker whose chief duties were to teach home care of the sick and cooking, and by continuous encouragement, advice, and pressure to raise the standard of sanitation and

care of houses and premises. The manager said that good effects of this teaching could still be seen. It was discontinued because "we did not think it paid," though it must be confessed that one hardly understands what they would consider "paying" if work good enough to leave its trace some years after did not qualify. The community worker at the Victory Mills in Fayetteville has put much emphasis on a health program since starting her work in 1917. The county Red Cross has coöperated by holding two classes in health and education.

At the Caraleigh Mill at Raleigh the acting executive has for many years personally carried on something of a health education and sanitation campaign. It proceeded more vigorously when, in 1919, the mill employed a general community worker who promoted this along with her other work. The village, with its efficient rubbish and garbage removal system, its orderly yards and clean streets, is evidence of the success of the program. This village has had since 1925 the services of a Metropolitan nurse as well. One good-sized mill employed a woman for general community work with some emphasis on care of the sick. The executive interviewed thought "she was a trained nurse. She gave individual instruction in nursing when visiting the sick for assistance. She was here four years and did good work. She got a lot of families to improve their way of living. When she left we just did not employ a successor—did not consider it worth enough. She did a great work, and there are still evidences of it in the village." As in the similar case cited above, one is tempted to ask what standards of worth are applied, when work effective enough to have left evidences after some eight years is not continued. Ten other plants referred to the health education and nursing aid and instruction given by their welfare workers, thus making fourteen in this group.

The above eighty-two different plants, are, as we have seen, greatly dissimilar in the extent and nature of their health or nursing service. They are alike in three particulars: the work is recent in origin; it is on more or less impermanent foundations, being based on the premise and the profits of "flush times" or on a shifting spirit of coöperation, so that it is not surprising to find many experiments abandoned; it is rather casual and slight in nature—a visiting nurse employed or a

series of classes begun more or less as the spirit moves someone, or as an epidemic impresses the community with the need.

SPECIAL HEALTH PROGRAMS—COMPANY DOCTORS

Somewhat more stable, of longer duration, and certainly more intensive are the health programs undertaken by individual mills or by a single company among its group of mills. Included in this study are ninety-one plants which may be said to have or to have had a special program. In twenty-one cases it has been abandoned.

The oldest and rarest form of special health scheme consisted of a company doctor's services. Thirty years ago the Wennonah Mills at Lexington employed a company doctor, this being one of the earliest examples found. The plan was discontinued after about a year. "We found that many of our people preferred to have their own doctor, even though they could have the services of ours at half price, and he was an excellent young doctor. He also grew tired of the arrangement as his practice grew in volume. Generally speaking, I doubt the wisdom of such an arrangement. It might be all right in a large mill district where they could afford to pay a doctor for practically all of his time." This mill has for six or seven years paid one-fourth of the salary of a township nurse who serves the employees of the company along with those of other industries in the town, so that at present this plant belongs in the group of eighty-two already referred to, though not included in the discussion of them above.

Another early example of medical service was at the Sterling Cotton Mills in Franklinton. Ever since the mills started in 1895 the pay-roll office has taken out six cents per week for each member of the family of each worker, with which medical service has been provided. Each family can choose its own doctor. This fund is sufficient for the purpose, the mill never having had to subsidize the scheme, though of course it gets the doctors' services somewhat more cheaply since they are thus sure of their pay. This scheme has never been accompanied by abuse, such as the calling of doctors for the most trivial complaints. The experience of the mills at Roanoke

Rapids along a similar line started in 1899 and has continued to the present, but as it has developed into an elaborate hospital scheme, it will be discussed in some detail later. Washington Mill at Mayodan, founded in 1895, has had a company doctor from the beginning. The doctor is paid a straight salary and he takes care of all sickness without charge except for maternity cases and operations. The employees give three cents a week for each member of the family. This does not pay the total salary of the doctor, which the mill completes as a subsidy to health work. They have changed doctors many times since the plan started because they have had a policy of taking young men fresh from their training. This has been very satisfactory—good doctors and no complaints from the people. The superintendent mentioned several doctors with a state reputation who had started out with the company. The company has also employed a nurse since "a while before the war." She does home visiting and helps with the sick and teaches the people in the care of the sick. She also holds monthly meetings of the women of the town for the discussion of health and related topics, this work being carried on through the Ladies' Aid Society. She initiates and arranges meetings for the county home demonstration agent, who gives instruction in canning, cooking, and other subjects. She is the liaison officer between the mill and the county welfare officer and gets excellent coöperation from all the county agents. Naturally much of her work is in coöperation with the doctor.

The Royal Mills at Wake Forest started a system twenty years ago under which every employee who agrees, has ten cents a week for each member of his family deducted from his wages; this is paid to a local doctor by way of salary for attending those families. Three-fourths of the operatives on the pay-roll, including practically all employees of long service, belong to this plan. It has always been very satisfactory, the families feeling that they get the service more cheaply than they would for the customary doctors' fees. After a family has lived there some time it is pretty sure to join. There is nothing compulsory about the plan, but the people come in after seeing how it operates with their acquaintances and neighbors. The manager believes that the success of such a

plan depends very largely on the doctor, and that the mill has been very fortunate in having had for many years a man who took a deep personal interest in the group, and in whom the people had confidence. This doctor had served them from the beginning until his death about two years ago, and the manager thinks that the present one will be as good.

The only really simple company doctor plan was found in a medium-sized hosiery mill. The scheme seems to be a family affair, the doctor serving his son's employees and "seldom making any charge; and I don't believe anybody pays him when he does make a charge!" added the superintendent.

NURSES AND NURSING SERVICE

Nurses, of course, are far more numerous. Twenty-six groups of mills representing sixty-seven plants have nurses and have had them for periods varying from ten years to a few months. As these groups include most of the large employers of the state, they include a majority of the workers considered in this study. Some of these plants deserve special mention. The Highland Park Mills and Chadwick-Hoskins Mills at Charlotte each pays the salary of a nurse and has the work directed by the Charlotte Nursing Association, which secures the nurses as well. This plan was started ten years ago by a civic club of the city, consisting of some 150 or 200 men, who secured subscriptions for it and organized a nursing service for the entire city. The mills consider this the most satisfactory way to get the work done efficiently and with little trouble to themselves. The health work at Spray started twenty years ago when typhoid fever was so common as to make a general campaign against it necessary. The Civic Association described in Chapter VI progressed in its health program from general propaganda to a nursing service in 1910, when innoculation, improved toilets, the creation of other sanitary conditions, and health education were the chief methods employed. They used to have fifty or sixty cases of typhoid a year; last year they had one. The nursing service and innoculation were well accepted from the beginning, with no suspicion of dislike for the nurses. There are now two in Spray, one in Leaksville, and two in Draper. Those

in Spray are maintained by the Civic Association made up of several companies; the others are maintained by the Carolina Cotton and Woolen Mills Company.

Proximity Manufacturing Company at Greensboro had used visiting nurses since 1913; before that time considerable attention to health, visiting the sick, and educational work had been going on since the beginning of welfare work in 1903. At Revolution Mills, which have always combined in their welfare program with Proximity, there have been classes in home nursing and baby care ever since the village nurse began her work in 1917. The village had tonsil and baby clinics before the city of Greensboro did. Three years ago there were thirty tonsil and adenoid operations in one day. The city doctor was assisted by an eye, ear, nose, and throat specialist and other doctors from one of the town hospitals; the village nurses were assisted by nurses brought by the doctor and some from the other villages. The doctors agreed beforehand to take as their fee whatever sum they and the welfare superintendent should decide upon. The latter examined the pay-roll of the families concerned and determined what each should pay, the amounts varying from nothing to $15. The patients were taken care of in a temporary hospital at the expense of the mill. At these mills the company makes sure that a good doctor lives in the village by furnishing one with a home and an office. He takes care of accidents from the mill and any charity cases in the village, and for these the mill makes good his fees. The doctors say that collections among the mill people are better than among the non-mill part of their practice in the locality. The schools maintain a health program, the nurse going every week to the schools for talks, examinations, and other health education work. Each year there is a big health meeting of the whole community, with speeches on health, propaganda against mosquitoes and flies, and a distribution of pamphlets on health subjects.

The P. H. Hanes Knitting Company's mill near Winston-Salem has had a trained nurse since 1918. This is the only case encountered in which the nurse is employed on a basis of coöperative pay, here twenty-five cents per family per week. Visiting, home training in care of the sick, and assistance when needed are her chief duties, and "being right much

of a doctor she is able to save the families many doctor's bills for minor ailments." At a well equipped first-aid room in the drug store building she attends first-aid cases from the mill and at regular hours each afternoon receives villagers able to come to the office, this being in addition to her home visiting. She also holds group meetings of mothers for instruction in baby care. Four years ago the mill inaugurated its first tonsil clinic, which was repeated the following year. The mill employed a surgeon from Winston-Salem for $100 a day and brought in three nurses to aid the regular village nurse. Cots were borrowed from the county and a two-day clinic held in the school building. The first year they removed the tonsils of forty-one children at a nominal charge of $1 per child. After two years there were no longer so many in the village who needed this attention, and the mill therefore arranged that one of the hospitals in Winston-Salem should take the children —some ten or eleven cases. Each year when the school children are measured and weighed, all who are found to be undernourished are given a quart of milk a day. This has been done for four years. The mill and individuals contribute the money for this milk, which is bought since the mill does not run a dairy. For the last few years the superintendent has been planting about ten acres of turnips, mustard, kale, and the like so that the people can have the greens in the spring. They are not allowed to use the turnips. When the greens begin to grow in late winter and early spring he allows the villagers to cut them at intervals, allowing time for them to grow. "We let them on for two weeks and off for two weeks, and it is surprising how quickly they clean it up, too!" He does this because he considers that few of the families get as many greens in the spring as they need for health; especially is he interested in the plan as a health measure for the children. This bit of health work costs about $150 a year.

Three mills have had rather interesting experiences with "practical nurses." The Chipman-Burrows Hosiery Mill at East Flat Rock has for the entire seventeen years of its existence had a practical nurse in the employ of the company. She works at a rather skilled job in the mill when she is not needed by one of the families, but when she is needed the super-

intendent sends her out, continuing her regular full-time pay. The manager considers this arrangement a success as she is a good nurse, works well with the doctors, and has the confidence of everybody in the small village. A mill in Salisbury has had as full-time village nurse, for the past ten years, a woman who used to be employed in the mill. She is a practical nurse with a liking and gift for the work and her considerable experience has made her very capable. The president said that doctors who practise in the village tell him that they would rather work with her than with a trained nurse, for she knows the people and is not averse to helping in any way necessary in the home when there is sickness, a point of considerable importance when dealing with the families of wage earners. The original purpose in employing this nurse was to provide aid for women in confinement cases, but she has proved valuable and popular in all sorts of sickness. Many of the operatives carry Metropolitan insurance, and as the insurance company employs a nurse in Salisbury, her assistance is available as well.

Not so happy was the experience of the third of these, the Sapona Mills at Cedar Falls. The chief executive of the company said that he had long been impressed with the need for someone to aid in sickness, especially in cases of confinement, for the village is rather isolated and there are not even any Negro women who can be secured for general household assistance. Accordingly, in 1922 the mill employed a practical nurse, paying her a regular salary and allowing the employees to have her services at a dollar a day. But some of them wanted her without pay, and others wanted her to cook for them when they did not need her for sickness; and after six or eight months the mill discontinued the experiment.

So far we have mentioned but one nurse who serves the plant as much as or more than the village—the one employed at the cotton mill branch of the P. H. Hanes Knitting Company. There are three others. The P. H. Hanes Knitting Company at Winston-Salem, a large employer of women and girls from all over the city, has no village system but it has maintained a nurse and first-aid room in the plant for twelve or fifteen years. The accidents are few in number and minor in nature, so that the nurse's duties permit her having charge

of the adjoining rest room as well. Another plant nurse at the Kendall Mills at Paw Creek, whose services date from early in 1926, has a first-aid room, an operating room, and a quiet room as quarters for her work in the plant. As the plant is small she has considerable time to do outside work. She cares for village cases needing aid, gives advice and treatment at the plant first-aid room, does home visiting, has given anti-typhoid injections to nearly everybody in the village, conducts a club of mothers studying health matters, and holds a tonsil clinic with a nominal charge of $7.50 for the operation. Another mill under Northern management, the Beacon Manufacturing Company, although only started in 1925 has already set up a small hospital. It is a sort of dormitory with six beds and an operating room which local doctors may use for their work. The doctors collect their own fees from the patients. A nurse in the community is available for such intermittent services as are required, and the mill pays her for the time she works, collecting from the employees the actual cost of the service and of medical supplies. At the time of the interview for this study the manager was planning to employ this nurse on a full-time basis, arranging that she conduct a first-aid room to be fitted up in the mill, and in addition do home visiting and give instruction in sanitary methods and nursing.[3]

HEALTH PROGRAM AT ROANOKE RAPIDS

One of the most widely known and most complete health programs is that of the Roanoke Mills and Rosemary Manufacturing Company, large damask manufacturers at Roanoke Rapids. The system started very simply with a company doctor in 1899, almost as soon as the mill opened. With the growth of the mills and the communities, doctors and nurses have been added until now these two related companies employ four doctors and two nurses; and a separate company in the same town—not included in this study—employs a doctor and

[3]In a letter dated March 1, 1928, the superintendent notes the following: "Since our interview we have set up a first aid department with a full time nurse and have also installed a second-hand X-Ray machine which we acquired from the Oteen Hospital."

a nurse. The mills pay them salaries and consider them full-time workers, though the doctors are free to serve other patients if they have the time. The president said that the doctors have always worked harmoniously with each other and that there has never been any complaint from them that the people abuse the system by calling them unnecessarily. The doctors are the judges in such cases, and if they find a family that is inclined to do this they deal with the matter themselves. Nor has there ever been any complaint from the employees of lack of attention from the doctors or nurses. The nurses give their full time to employees and their families, not being allowed to do any outside work. They give vaccines, look after health conditions under the doctors' orders, visit and give instruction in the care of the sick and of babies, and also do bedside nursing whenever a doctor asks that a case of his be attended by a nurse. In addition to these nurses for the village and employees, the Red Cross employs for the schools a full-time nurse who examines children for bad tonsils, adenoids, and undernourishment, and performs the other usual duties of a school nurse. She reports her findings to the doctors so that they can give treatment to those needing it and take up necessary matters with parents.

Capping this system of medical and nursing care at Roanoke Rapids is the hospital. The forerunner of the present hospital was started in 1911 by a local physician, Dr. Long, the brother of an official in the company, who opened a small private hospital in what had been a residence. As he worked there in a little institution totally inadequate to the needs of the community, he gradually evolved the idea of a mill hospital for all the employees. His plan as accepted and put in operation in 1916 was as follows: the mill companies of the town built and equipped the hospital, the expense being pro-rated among them according to the number of employees. They then deeded the entire property to a corporation which was formed to operate the hospital as a non-profit, eleemosynary institution. The hospital therefore really belongs to itself. It is administered by a board of trustees made up of the physicians of the town and the managers of the mill and electric power corporations, the mayor of the town, and the chairman of the board of county commissioners. So far there have been

no physicians in the town except those in the employ of the companies, since these three always have time to serve the small non-mill population as well as employees. If any other doctor should settle there he would not, perhaps, be on the board.

Each employee pays—or has deducted from his pay envelope—fifteen cents a week, which entitles him and all his dependents to care in the hospital upon the order of one of the regular doctors. The amount used to be ten cents,[4] from which it has been increased to fifteen cents. This money plus the charges to non-operative patients forms the income of the hospital. Persons not employed by the companies may be received when all accommodations are not needed for employed patients, and they are taken at regular hospital prices. As there is no other hospital nearer than Rocky Mount, this one serves all the country around for a radius of fifty miles. The service to outside patients would form a source of considerably more income if there were not so much charity work to be done; but even as things are and with the low weekly contribution of the employees the hospital has always made its way financially. If it should not, the deficit would be pro-rated among the mills on the basis of number of employees. It is an up-to-date institution in an excellent modern, brick, fire-proof building, with seventy-five beds. It is a busy place, averaging three or four major operations a day.

Finally must be mentioned the true pioneer work of the mills at Roanoke Rapids in malaria eradication. The whole area used to be infested with malaria-bearing mosquitoes, and the president said that 50 per cent of the people had malaria. He was probably too conservative by nearly a half! There was, of course, excessive absenteeism in the mill. "You knew you would not have John Jones tomorrow because that was his chill day, and so you had to have somebody who did not have one on that day to take his place." The village contained many more potential workers than were needed to man the machinery, in order to have enough to muster a full force at any one time. In 1912 Dr. Long, who had recently started

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[4]A description in "Health and Happiness" number of *Southern Textile Bulletin* (Charlotte: Nov. 22, 1923), says the fee was then five cents.

his private hospital in Roanoke Rapids, secured for the mills the services of the officials of the United States Public Health Service who had cleaned up the Panama Zone and were then returning to Washington. They directed the draining of swampy places, the cleaning of ditches, and the proper placing of dripping cans filled with oil so as to keep a film of oil over the surface of all the little slow-moving streams and ditches. This campaign proved successful beyond their greatest hopes. The mills have made this work part of the regular business of running the plants: each spring the outside departments clear the ditches, clean the cans, refill them, and tend them. Less than one-tenth of one per cent of the people now have malaria. Typhoid, formerly very common, was eradicated by putting in state-approved septic tanks and drilling deep wells for water. The latter are taken for granted in the villages of the Piedmont, but in the mills of the lower part of the state it is often a temptation to use the simple, cheap little pitcher pumps. In fact, in this and several other villages one sees occasionally such a pump on the porch and concludes that the tenant must drive it for himself rather than go to the pump that serves several houses. But at Roanoke Rapids the people evidently use the deep wells for drinking, since they no longer have typhoid.

OTHER SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS

The system we have just described, with its thirty years of development and expansion, is by far the most complete that was encountered in the work for this study; it is certainly the most complete to be found in the state if not in the South. But there are others, as we have seen, which resemble it and which have developed in proportion to the size of the plants where we find them. In many interviews with managers and superintendents it was apparent that sanitation, health, or care of the sick is somewhat a hobby of the head executive. This is sometimes observed in villages where no nurse or worker is employed and where the head of the mill sees to many such things personally.

An excellent example of this is the story of mosquito eradication at Great Falls Mill, Rockingham. Mr. Claude Gore,

the president, said that previously there had been so much malaria every year that the mill had almost to be closed for lack of workers. About 1912, soon after the state health work began under Dr. Rankin, Mr. Gore invited him to come to a meeting which was to inaugurate an anti-mosquito campaign. The mill called a big community meeting with refreshments for everybody, at which Dr. Rankin spoke on malaria prevention, and a prize of $50 was offered for the largest number of tin cans turned in by one person, with other cash prizes for smaller numbers of cans. But this did not stop malaria; and so they held a clean-up contest, with $50 as a first prize and with other smaller prizes for cleaning up the premises of the cottages. Then the mill, as a part of the campaign, put in running water to see if that would help matters. Still malaria and the mosquitoes persisted. Then they tried oiling the puddles. At nearly every house there was a little puddle at the spigot near the back door. They set a man to making the rounds every week and putting oil on these puddles. A whole season of this showed no improvement. Mr. Gore called in the man and "'jacked him up proper"—told him that he was not doing his job thoroughly, but he insisted that he was. Finally Mr. Gore decided to go out on a trip of inspection himself, to look in everything on the premises capable of holding water. He found at one house a wash pot swarming with mosquitoes. The woman insisted that she had boiled clothes in that pot the week before. Soon he found a kraut barrel set under a house with some water in it to keep it from falling to pieces till next kraut-making time. His trip around the village netted eleven such barrels. After this they had no more malaria. At the invitation of a local doctor, Dr. Von Esdorf, malaria expert of the United States Health Department visited the village soon after the final clean-up and complimented the management upon its successful fight. He could not find an anopheles in the village or near it. Now, instead of thirty or forty hands off duty at once with chills there is seldom a case. But the fight cost $5,000 and several years of effort.

Another company that has had an interesting and illuminating experience with malaria is the Mansfield Mill at Lumberton. About fifteen years ago the management started a campaign against this disease, which was proving a veritable

plague. They cleaned up the village by propaganda and by offering to supply the screens at cost; they interested the people in screening the houses. Dr. McPhaul, now of Charlotte, led the fight and the educational campaign. In two years, according to the figures of the county health officer, they had reduced malaria from 40 per cent to 2 per cent—whatever those figures mean. Fourteen years ago the company distributed free to its employees, through the company store, $600 worth of quinine a year. In 1925 they gave out only 500 capsules. The country here is flat and rather swampy, so that this is probably one of the most remarkable examples of what can be accomplished merely by cleaning up the village itself.

Another scheme now in process of development is that of the Leward Cotton Mills at Worthville. The mill is an old one remodeled and the houses, though very substantial, did not suit the new secretary-treasurer who took charge in 1919. He set about renovating the insides—removing the forty years' accumulation of paper and wall covering down to the original ceiled walls, which he painted. He went about this gradually, a room at a time. It was highly popular, and everybody was begging for his own house to be done next. With this as an accomplished fact, a little later he personally started a health organization, the object of which was to hold village meetings with talks by visiting specialists on health subjects. He made an effort to develop a forum with questions and discussion as he was eager to have the villagers acquire the habit of expressing themselves. For various reasons the plan did not work out as he had hoped, so that the mill is now awaiting the erection of a community building that will provide headquarters for meetings and for a health worker. Every house in the village is now fumigated before a new tenant goes into it.

NURSING AND HEALTH WORK DISCONTINUED

Although we shall devote a section to the consideration of failures of various kinds in welfare projects, it will perhaps not be out of order here to summarize briefly the experiences of mills which have discontinued health programs. In a few mills that we have already mentioned in other connections,

the health program has been abandoned entirely; in others it has been only partially abandoned. Twenty-one plants remain to be considered. One employed a nurse in 1917 following many years of interest and activity in health matters on the part of the owner's wife. "But the people did not take to it," and the work was discontinued after two years. Another mill had a very similar experience beginning in 1916 and lasting for three years. A third tried out a nurse after having had two general welfare workers but considered a welfare worker more popular and went back to that plan. In a fourth mill a nurse employed for the influenza epidemic in 1918 and continued for visiting and health educational work was discontinued upon a change in management. A fifth employed a nurse in 1918 for general welfare work with emphasis on health, "and we just never got anybody else when she married in 1920." A group of three mills employed a nurse in 1920 but discontinued her after two years "because she got lazy on the job, and would not go on her rounds if it was too hot or too cold or rainy!" A very large mill with a fairly elaborate welfare program engaged a nurse in 1918 but let her go after four years "because the people imposed on her—expected her to do all the obstetrical work in the village." Three others make up a group which have had an experience extending over some ten years with a nurse "sent down by some charitable association up North." The mills furnished her a house and contributed $35 a month to her salary, and she carried on the duties of a regular visiting nurse, aided, in epidemics or on special occasions, by additional nurses employed by the mill. She left in 1926, presumably because the association discontinued her support. The mill management did not continue her or the work as they had grown lukewarm over such activities: other welfare workers they had been employing had grown careless and showed lack of interest, and so they gave up all workers together. Also of this group are two mills under one management which had as their visiting nurse for twelve years a nurse who was caring for a crippled doctor. She drove him about with her on her calls, and when a case was too complicated for her would report the symptoms to the doctor in the pony cart or automobile at the door for his diagnosis. She was a part-time nurse for the village, and the doctor did

his part merely as an avocation, so that these villages were fairly well served by a nurse and doctor at comparatively little expense. The invalid died and the nurse left town at a time when a long depression had left the mills in a poor financial condition, and hence her place has not been filled.

Finally, a group of seven mills under one management, but located in three different towns, employed a number of nurses, some of them as early as 1912. In one town where the plant was small the nurse served the mill and the families of workers as well, but the service was not very well received and was discontinued after a year. In another town where there were several larger plants the first nurse was used chiefly for duty in the plant but added home visiting. In 1916, with the beginning of a more elaborate welfare scheme, another white nurse was employed and a colored nurse for duty in the plant employing Negroes and among their families. The whole welfare program, including the nursing, was abandoned in 1921 due to a depression and a new policy following some changes in the executive offices.

There were 136 plants, or well over a third of those included in this study, which reported no health work. Thirty-six of them are hosiery mills, and five are specialty textile plants. Most of these plants are small, and nearly all are situated in the midst of towns; their workers are scattered over the whole community; they rarely employ whole families; they seldom have any village or housing projects; and there is little or no tradition of welfare work. Of the ninety-five cotton mills which reported no health work or nurse, a number have the services of a county or city nurse for visiting; but if her work in the village is so slight and the coöperation of the mill so small that the executive interviewed did not know of it or remember to speak of it, the chances are that very little work is done, perhaps only among a few tuberculosis or other special cases. On the other hand, several executives complained that they do not get the attention which they consider the villagers are entitled to as citizens, or that the mill is entitled to as a large taxpayer. There were even a few cases where an executive in a town reported coöperative arrangements among the industries to support a visiting nurse although men interviewed earlier had not mentioned it. While

they all probably contribute something and perhaps get some little service, again there is doubt whether the service amounts to much if it is not remembered and mentioned when the subject is brought up. Again, several stated that they contribute to the local Red Cross but get no return, some speaking of this by way of complaint, others as a situation to be expected, and still others as a possible resource they do not rely upon or need, since it would apply mainly to relief, "and we look after our people in that line."

THE OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

Enough comments have been made on the various groups and kinds of health work to render any additional observations unnecessary. Suffice it to say that activities of the mills which are connected with sanitation, health, and care of the sick are more common than any other save aid to churches and schools. They are, if we consider informal personal interest and work of the owners and managers and their families, among the oldest activities; and except for the few company doctors they are, if we consider the visiting nurse and health education, the newest. Health work is apparently very well received by the employees, there being only a few cases where it is not popular and appreciated, and just as few cases of dissatisfaction with it on the part of the management. And usually both types of exceptions are traceable to the individual nurse on the job rather than to the work itself. Even in these cases the writer does not recall a single executive who did not think it was a good thing for a mill to do health work as a business proposition, as a philanthropic work, and as a humanitarian duty. There have been about as many cases of mills discontinuing it as we have found discontinuing other activities, but, with the exceptions of unsuitable health workers, noted as the cases were described, this has been done as a matter of financial expediency.

And yet, of course, looked at in the large, programs that include nurses are merely in their beginnings and touch a minority of the workers. Only one plant employing fewer than 200 workers has, or has had, a nurse, and in that case she is a practical nurse who works in the mill between her pro-

fessional duties. There were only ten nurses who served groups of fewer than 500 workers, considering groups of mills served by a single nurse as a single unit. And yet, as we have seen, the small mill, and even the single mill, is still most common in North Carolina. The chief hope for the future is the trend toward use of the newly inaugurated county and city health agencies. It is the only hope of the small mill, and, as we have shown, is of great use to the larger plant. Information gathered in this study seems to indicate that the mills are using these public health nurses as rapidly as they are being made available.

CHAPTER IX

OTHER OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Besides these more general fields of school, church, community, and health work, there are other activities which mills have tried at one time or another. No doubt there are many that have been tried, abandoned, and forgotten. One acute observer of life in the state and the South has said that there is no scheme so fantastic that it cannot be sold—figuratively or financially—to a mill owner.[1] Perhaps we shall be nearer the truth if we amend this dictum: what the mill man has not evolved for himself out of his experience or borrowed from his neighbor mill he has had sold to him by enterprising salesmen. This chapter on miscellaneous outside and welfare activities will contain examples of all three origins.

GROUP INSURANCE

One of the most frequent kinds of "bought" schemes is group insurance. This is a relatively new thing, the oldest example found having been started in 1911 by the Love-Robinson group of mills in and near Gastonia. It did not appear again until 1915, in which year the Aurora Mill at Burlington introduced such a plan, followed in 1916 by the Bloomingfield and Paola Mills at Statesville and in 1917 by the Tolar, Hart, and Holt Mills and the Holt-Williamson Mill at Fayetteville. In all, this makes ten plants, of which seven still retain the insurance in force.

The years 1918-20 were a time of great profits and great labor turnover, the one making all sorts of innovations financially possible and the other making them seem desirable. And so this period saw an increase in group insurance schemes, especially among the larger concerns. Among the plants in-

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[1]Gerald W. Johnson, "Service in the Cotton Mill," *American Mercury*, June, 1925.

cluded in this study forty-three mills, making up twelve companies or chains of mills, started group insurance for employees in these years. But of these, thirty-five plants representing seven companies or groups of mills have dropped it. Since 1920, group insurance has had a more gradual and normal growth, for thirty-nine plants, making up twenty groups, have inaugurated it and of these, fourteen, making up five companies, have abandoned it. Whether its more gradual growth is being matched by permanence is of course not yet proved, for though the above figures seem to show a smaller proportion dropping it, it must be stated that some mills of the last period have had it in force less than a year, at least one was planning to drop it when the premium had to be renewed, and two or three others evidenced some lack of enthusiasm for it. It is perhaps not wrong to conclude, however, that group insurance is now on a more secure footing. The justification for this conclusion is to be found in the trend toward coöperative payment of the premium instead of payment by the company alone. No company that started insurance after 1923 did so on other than a coöperative payment basis, and several that had been paying the entire premium have changed over to the coöperative plan. There were only two companies (nine plants) using a coöperative plan which dropped insurance, and in both these cases the experiment was under way less than a year.

The situation, then, stood as follows at the time of the interviews: fifty-two plants, representing fourteen single mills or groups and 10,500 workers had had group insurance and had dropped it; forty plants, representing twenty-four single companies or groups of mills and 11,300 workers, still have it in force; twelve, representing six groups and 1,800 workers, are considering it. Thus ninety-two plants out of 322 or nearly 28 per cent of those included in this study have or have had insurance. In addition, two large groups of mills have coöperative insurance schemes for the executive and supervisory force, extending down to second hands. The relatively few examples do not seem to justify any attempts at generalization as to the tendency of large or small plants to start or drop insurance.

Among companies which pay the entire premium the insur-

ance starts when an employee has been working a short period —usually three months—and is usually for $300, though some policies of $200 or $500 were found. This sum increases by a set amount or upon a graduated scale with each additional year of service until a maximum of $500 or $1,000 or even $1,500 is reached. The mill assumes the responsibility of notifying the insurance company of the addition of new names and the dropping of those who leave. Regarding any sort of activity it has become common to say that people appreciate it only if they put something into it themselves. Whether the insurance companies applied this axiom to group insurance or fitted their policies to suit a new idea, the result was coöperative group insurance. Under the coöperative scheme the amount of a policy is sometimes set at a given sum for all workers but is more frequently arranged on a graduated scale according to wages and classes of workers. It does not vary with length of service. The total cost of the premiums, based on the average age of the employees taking insurance, is usually divided about equally between company and employees though some companies have arranged to pay two-thirds. The employees' share of the cost is then pro-rated among participants according to the amount of insurance they are carrying, so that the older persons get theirs at the same rate as the younger ones. This has been a source of some slight friction at a few mills, but group policies are at such low rates that this factor has not been of importance in any instance. The most frequent amount given as the employees' share was fifteen cents a week, or sixty cents a month on the thousand, which is taken from the workers' weekly envelopes at the pay office. As in most cases the rank and file workers had $500 policies, this made thirty cents a month the most frequent cost. In most mills the policies covered death only, though some had a total disability clause with payment extending over a series of months or years.

In these coöperative schemes the insurance company requires a certain proportion—75 to 80 per cent—of the workers to participate. The mill assumes the responsibility of presenting the plan to new employees, but after it has been in force long enough for all to become acquainted with it, it is common for new workers to apply to the foremen when their waiting period

is over. When a worker leaves the employ of the company the mill has no trouble in keeping its accounts, as he no longer draws pay from which to deduct the premium. The former worker, for his part, has the privilege (without examination) of converting his policy into a regular life insurance within a certain period, usually about three months. He may then carry it at regular life rates for his age at the time of converting. This is entirely his own responsibility.

The question as to when a sick or superannuated person is still an employee and when he ceases to be is often a nice one. He is usually considered such as long as he remains in the village and does not enter the employ of some other company or person. The writer has known of instances, and others were mentioned in interviews for this study, when a person has been carried for two or more years in cases of lingering illness. Where the insurance plan includes a total disability clause such individuals would begin receiving the policy in monthly payments upon recognition of their illness as incurable.

Perhaps the most frequent use of group insurance has been as a device for reducing labor turnover. This was a very troublesome evil during the period of the war and for some years following. These were the years when the insurance companies seem to have made a special effort to sell group insurance to employers in North Carolina, as elsewhere. Their representatives were no doubt really convinced that it would hold workers—certainly they were very convincing to the mill executives. This expectation was given in some twenty cases as the main reason for starting the scheme and appears in many more cases along with other reasons. In this respect it has been a disappointment. Only one company with two plants testified to a belief that it had helped to retain workers; another company of three plants, which had adopted it only a few months before the interview, still had faith in it as a remedy. The writer feels certain that this latter company is doomed to disappointment, since the turnover there is due to two fundamental causes which insurance will not touch. For the most part, all the other mills discovered that it was doing no good and dropped it or in the meantime came to believe it a good thing for other reasons. Certainly this experience with insurance has taught the mill executives who have had

it a good deal about labor turnover. It has shown them, even if very roughly, what their turnover rate is, a thing few mills in the state know. It has also shown them concretely and forcibly a fact which they were vaguely aware of before, namely, that labor turnover, beyond a certain normal rate for each plant due to its policies and conditions, is the result of market conditions of labor and product and is quite untouched by any devices they can set up.

The most frequent reasons given for dropping group insurance were, first, that it was too much trouble to keep the necessary records and, second, that the employees were unappreciative or suspicious that the company was receiving money upon the death of an employee, or both. The first reason is a natural one for the mills of the South. They have felt the need for very few records—production, overhead, and labor costs being kept only in the most general fashion. And so naturally they consider the clerical work necessary to accuracy in placing new employees on the insured list, keeping track of absent persons lest they be counted when they have actually left the company, indicating length of service and all the rest of it as quite a nuisance as well as an expense. In regard to the second reason, the feeling that insurance was unappreciated must have grown out of none too good relations between management and workers, or the scheme must have been initiated rather clumsily and without proper explanation of the plan, its purposes, and its spirit.

EXAMPLES OF EXPERIENCE WITH GROUP INSURANCE

Perhaps the best way to indicate the varied reasons for starting group insurance and for discontinuing it, and the attitudes of workers and management toward it, is to set down a number of individual experiences as we have done with other activities. For each mill has had a different history.

1. Two plants under the same management, one of the earlier managements to experiment with group insurance, found that the workers disliked it, believing that it was a plan to make them stay whether they wanted to or not. "The company's object was to make them willing to stay and want to stay, but of course there was nothing in the plan that

made them stay, especially as the mills paid all the premium. As it was not understood and appreciated we dropped it after two years."

2. One large group of mills started insurance on an equal payment basis in the hope of reducing turnover. Some of the people were suspicious, thinking that the company was making money out of the scheme, and the whole thing was so unsatisfactory that it was continued for only seven months. Only one plant of the group wanted to continue it, a mill doing fine work and hence employing a higher type of worker and already having a stable force.

3. One mill took out insurance some years ago to apply to all employees then on the pay-roll, but with the understanding that after that date new employees over a certain age were not to receive policies. One man over the age limit left and worked at another mill for some two months, thus forfeiting his policy. He returned to the first mill and died soon afterwards. His family attempted to collect the insurance and entered suit, claiming that a new policy had been given him upon his return. The insurance company would not help fight the case nor be responsible for the amount of the claim; so the mill paid the amount demanded and dropped the insurance plan completely. The manager said the plaintiff's claim that a policy had been given him upon his return might have been true—"hard to keep up with such things." Evidently the uncertainty was due to the mill's keeping no record of ages, or perhaps no sort of record, since otherwise it is difficult to see why the insurance company would not have helped or why the mill should have lost the case.

4. A group of eight plants carried insurance for three years and dropped it because it cost so much in premiums and in clerical work and trouble in keeping the list up-to-date. The final blow came when a relative of a former employee threatened suit for a policy. Such was the state of the records that the insurance company declined to pay or fight the suit, whereupon the company's lawyer advised the mill to pay in full lest the suit cost more than the policy. "We did, but it has cured us of insurance."

5. Three mills under the same management tried group insurance for a year, but "decided it was not a good thing—

it confused the people." "In what way?" "Well, they did not understand the plan. One or two tried to sue the mill after they had gone to some other plant to work. Most of the employees carry industrial insurance anyhow."

6. The superintendent of two mills thought group insurance would be a good thing because the "industrial insurance that so many of them carry is pretty expensive stuff." These mills had adopted death policy and a $10 a week sick benefit, the employee paying forty cents a week and the company the balance. At the end of the year there were not enough workers who wanted to renew to make up the necessary percentage, and so the plan was dropped. The whole experiment had not been very satisfactory—some thought that the company was making money out of it.

7. The objects of one good-sized mill in starting group insurance were to "get the people to settle down, to provide a benefit in case of death which the mill could hardly provide directly, and to have the advantage of a nurse to instruct people in the care of the sick." The managers were much disappointed in it and dropped it after two years. The superintendent said that he realized soon after starting it that it was not going to have as much effect in stabilizing the force as he had hoped, though he thought the other advantages would be worth the price. But the people did not like the nursing service and became angry when the nurse called on them and offered suggestions for care of the sick. There were two deaths while the policy was in force, "and neither beneficiary thanked us when we handed over the check. Well, yes, of course, there are lots of people who don't know how to thank you, or haven't been brought up to do that sort of thing, or for some other reason don't express their appreciation though they have it just the same." But apparently the beneficiaries' later actions showed even more clearly their lack of appreciation. One woman received $500 upon the death of her husband and shortly afterwards was seen out at the fair grounds offering to take her friends up in an aeroplane at $15 and $25 a ride! She had traded at the company store before this, but when she got her money she traded elsewhere until it was all gone and then came back asking for credit. Two or three employees at this mill refused to take the insur-

ance "because they did not want anything that was given to them." Instances of this were cited at several mills.

8. A medium-sized mill carried insurance for two years, during which time none of the workers died. As the scheme was not thought of very highly it was given up; and an employee died two weeks afterward. "We had been out $2,000 for it, and it had been no benefit to the people. We decided that if we did anything we would do it directly—but we never have," the manager added.

9. A group of ten mills tried insurance during the period of greatest labor turnover but discontinued it after a year "because the people did not care for it. Nobody died during the time so that they had no object lesson showing its value. Besides, it was too much trouble keeping up with the ins and outs."

10. A large group of mills, three of which are included in this study, carried insurance for four years, during which time they had one claim—a death. "But it was not appreciated, and it was right much trouble to keep the records necessary for the insurance company and too much expense for the good. Not a paying proposition."

11. A large company operating several mills tried group insurance thinking it would be a good way to take care of cases needing assistance and because the insurance company with whom they dealt was insistent that they try this. But it was too expensive, and they found they could give the same benefits themselves more cheaply. Besides, the company could not be sure the right beneficiaries got the money. At the death of an employee of long service the company is now accustomed to give to his widow or other dependents $500—"just common decency."

12 and 13. Two other companies operating ten plants between them gave as their reason for starting insurance the hope that it might prove a means of reducing turnover, and as a reason for stopping, the discovery that it was too much trouble to keep the records. As they claimed to have very little turnover it would seem that the record keeping should have been little trouble.

The story of the mills that are continuing the insurance is

of course happier, though there are several which expressed dissatisfaction with it.

14. A hosiery mill superintendent declared his intention of dropping it at the next premium date. "It was sold to us to reduce turnover, but I can't see that it has any bearing on the business at all. When they get ready to quit they are going to quit no matter how much insurance you have."

15. The manager of a small mill that has carried insurance for six years said that the workers like it, but he guesses that their enthusiasm would be greater if more policies had been paid—there had been only one death during that time. It costs much more than the workers get out of it, and he believes that a large company could best carry its own insurance.

16. A very old mill with a stable force put in insurance on an equal payment basis a year and a half ago, having no difficulty in getting the necessary number to sign up; but about 20 per cent have dropped it since. As there had been two claims, one death and one total disability, this seemed rather surprising until the manager explained that these object lessons in the value of the scheme came after most of the employees had given it up.

17. A small mill with many long-service employees has had five or six claims in the nine years during which the insurance has been carried; "but before long there will be many because of the large number of old employees." While the employees have always liked the ideas of insurance, the manager said that if he were putting it in now he would adopt a coöperative scheme, since people take more interest in anything to which they contribute. Indeed, this was a frequent comment.

18. The Love-Robinson group of mills has not had a claim for ten or eleven years, but their belief in insurance has not grown less. They have added a sick benefit, for which the employees help to pay.

19. The employees of a group of three small mills were (at the time of the interview) quite enthusiastic about their insurance plan of some six months' standing. "One reason for its popularity probably is the fact that they have already had one death and one total disability; there was one man who refused to take it who was killed in an auto accident, and

you often heard the remark that he ought to have taken it, and so on."

20. A mill that has been carrying insurance for a good many years has the policies made out to the company instead of directly to the beneficiaries. The manager then has an opportunity to talk over with the beneficiary his or her intentions as to use or investment of the money and to offer advice. He gave the details of several such conversations after recent deaths, which seemed to show that this arrangement is not taken amiss or resented. To be sure, it would be feasible only in a plant where the best of personal relations existed, for otherwise employees would suspect the motives of the company; in many of the mills where there seemed suspicion that the company was making money out of the plan, far less basis for such a belief existed than here.

Opinions regarding group insurance varied widely among the plants which were considering its adoption. The manager of a hosiery plant was hesitating because the health benefits "come so high for a plant employing a lot of women," and he thinks these benefits are the most important feature. Another executive who is considering it is puzzled about its efficacy. He showed from his records that he has little turnover and is therefore not interested in insurance from that point of view. But his observation has been that it is always the workers who remain in one place for a long time and have acquired savings who get the insurance, "while the fellow who moves about and is shiftless dies somewhere after too short a period of service to have a policy, though his family really needs it worse." The mill has to help the families of such migratory workers besides carrying insurance for the others. This is a rather unique argument but it is certainly consistent with the claim made by a number of mills that they started group insurance as a means of taking care of needy cases and hence consider it a humanitarian activity. Three large companies have mutual aid schemes which are similar to group insurance on the equal payment basis. These are chiefly to provide benefits in cases of sickness.

Group insurance is one of the newest of outside activities and yet in its short vogue it has already very largely changed from a scheme financed solely by the company to one in which

the employee and the company share the expense. An equally important change has come over that oldest of mill activities, the company store.

COMPANY STORES: REASONS FOR STARTING AND DISCONTINUING

It appears to be generally believed throughout the state that most mills operate company stores. This idea is a survival from the days when many mills did have them. The last two decades, which have seen such rapid increase in the number of mills, have, however, not seen a proportionate increase in stores. It is perhaps somewhat surprising, therefore, to find that the total number of mills that have, or have had, company stores is smaller than the number which have adopted that recent device, group insurance. Thus among the 322 mills included in this study fewer than seventy-five have ever had company stores. As two or more mills have in several cases been served by the same store there have been fewer stores than mills—sixty-three in fact. These figures include five plants and stores, concerning which the information was too indefinite to be treated in our detailed analysis. The total number of stores is perhaps too small to warrant conclusions based upon any elaborate division into classes. Their history does seem, however, to warrant a few generalizations, first, as to the reasons for starting and stopping the operation of such stores, and second, as to the changes in their relationship to the mills. It may be said that the term company store usually means a general store carrying groceries, dry goods, and various sorts of home necessities. More recently some organizations have added meat markets or drug stores, and a few have added furniture stores, but the whole is usually carried on under the same management as the general store and is thought of by both company and employees as a single entity.

As has already been mentioned, the first mills in North Carolina were built at points on the streams where water power could be used. More often than not these points were in the open country, too far from even a small village, upon which the people in the new settlement could depend for supplies. The mill workers seldom had any means of conveyance of

their own, and the poor roads and small demand for transportation precluded any public means. To be sure, most of the families consisted of rural people used to depending upon stores for only a minimum of household necessities, but this minimum was considerably increased when they exchanged farming for mill work, even though they still kept pigs and tended gardens. And so, more important than the church or the school, almost as important as the dwellings or the mill itself, was the little store which would carry a simple supply of provisions. Indeed, the country around as well as the village often came to depend on the mill store for its necessities and as a market for some of its produce. The books of the store at Great Falls Mill at Rockingham, for instance, show that coonskins were traded for molasses or skeins of yarns as far back as the eighteen-thirties and forties. Mill workers whose memory goes back to Civil War days mention similar examples.

The company store was a traditional activity of the cotton mill before the mill came to North Carolina. Local needs showed the wisdom of its presence. Even after the first necessity was past it came to be considered a convenience to the people, and in many cases no doubt it was. Private enterprise was not then so quick to set up a store at the suggestion of a village; certainly the small storekeeper was a bit wary of investing his all in a venture so bound up with the fortunes of the mill and the personal favor or disfavor of the mill owner. And so mill stores continued to be built in the twentieth century and by mills not far from towns.

But gradually emphasis changed, and we begin to find new mills starting stores upon the ground of protecting the workers in the matter of prices from the gouging of ill-principled shopkeepers who had set up, or might set up, shops on the edge of the mill property. No doubt protection from such a monopoly was necessary, although, as we shall see, the company store itself was often accused by the employees of charging high prices or committing unjust practices. Many executives of mills still operating stores stated, without being questioned on this point, that the village had other stores, thus providing competition and satisfying the people better than if they had no ready means of comparing prices.

Underlying all these reasons, of course, was the purpose of

making some profits on the business. In some cases this was probably quite subsidiary to the necessity of the situation; in others, no doubt, it was the main reason, as indeed it might well have been. In the earlier days the mills did not feel obliged to gild every outside activity into a philanthropy, as public opinion later made them do. The potential trade of a whole village had, to a mill owner, especially when he was in the strong position of employer as well, its advantage and attractions. Several executives who were interviewed expressed the belief that some of the older country mills used to make more profit on their stores than on the mill; one even declared that this was still generally believed to be true of a large mill company in the state. Of course it is impossible to prove or disprove such statements: there are no records of the old mill stores; owners and managers of their descendants would not disclose such private business to anyone, much less to an unofficial surveyor; and company stores have so often been accused of high prices that it is no longer respectable to admit even a reasonable profit.

These three general stages of necessity, convenience, and protection, with the possibility of profit always in the background, have been less a chronological series in the history of mills as a whole in North Carolina than stages in the trade development of the locality in which the mills were being built. Thus, two mills well inside town limits started company stores thirty or forty years ago, not from necessity or even convenience, but for protection (and partly for profit), abandoning them shortly after, at a time when many new country mills were starting them from necessity. On the other hand, a small mill built three years ago beside a river is in a place highly inconvenient to stores and is too small to attract private enterprise. Hence in setting up a little commissary, open for a part of the day, the owner was just as much under necessity as the mill managers of fifty years ago. These are rather extreme cases, but they illustrate the varying force of circumstances on the policy of the individual plant.

The reasons for discontinuing company stores, where they have been discontinued, are varied and mixed. They can be briefly summarized, though almost every instance shows its own individuality. The most frequent reason given was that

the store lost money because of bad debts, because of the feeling of most people that it was not really wrong or dishonest to "beat the company," or because of the impossibility of securing a store manager who would be as careful as the small proprietor. Again, the stores caused bad feeling: the people often felt that the company was trying to overcharge them. The whole tendency of the day toward independence and freedom from control in mill matters centers about the financial relationships of employer and employee, and the protest against anything that might savor of compulsion falls naturally upon the store. Further, such loss of money and annoyance may easily be avoided, for most villages are provided with numerous small stores and with good roads, busses, and privately owned cars which make nearby towns accessible.

TYPES OF COMPANY STORES AND RELATION TO THE MILLS

The early stores were "company stores" in the fullest sense of the word: they were owned, building and stock, by the mill company, and their managers and clerks were employees of the company. Indeed, the office of the mill was often in the store, and accounts of wages were kept there and balanced against charges for purchases, only the excess of wages—if any—being paid monthly. To a people unused to being "paid off" regularly this was merely irksome at times and not intolerable, as it would be today. Several old workers who lived under this system declared vigorously that "the people got along just as well as they do now," though of course there was a constant temptation to run into debt, there were all sorts of possibilities for misunderstanding about accounts with an illiterate group of workers and of unfair manipulation if the manager should be so minded, and all in all there was a feeling on the part of the workers of being bound to the mill.

Somewhat later, in the seventies and eighties, the mills paid their employees through the store, either in orders on it or in some form of script or check redeemable at the store in goods and once a month in cash. Before 1890 many of the mills used a system of cardboard disks about the size of a silver dollar, with different colors to distinguish the denominations, there being a disk for each coin in current use—$1.00,

$.50, $.25, $.10, $.05, $.02, and $.01. One side bore a large figure showing the denomination, and the other the name of the issuing company, with the signature of the treasurer. When money was tight these tokens or "checks" as they were commonly called, came to be used in the localities of the issuing mill as regular currency and were accepted by farmers and others as well as mill employees, with apparently few calls for redemption in cash. In Randolph County several mills issued such checks, and their use was common all up and down Deep River. They were accepted at face value as far away as High Point and Greensboro, twenty-five miles from the issuing mills. Some forty years ago a man was tried and sentenced to seven years in the federal prison for counterfeiting these Randolph County mill checks. It is probable that this was the first time the system had come to the attention of the government, for not long afterwards a man was sent from the Atlanta mint to stop the practice of issuing them. These and other mills paid in script for another decade, until as one superintendent expressed it, "the people got more enlightened and they wanted real money." Perhaps the growth of small stores created more demand for actual coin, while the greater ease, after the early and middle nineties, of securing it made cash payments more common. There were two or three instances—and more might have been found had the matter of private money been investigated throughout the study—of a return to script during the money panic of 1907.

Since the late eighteen-nineties, the relation between mill pay-roll office and company store has become one of coöperation in the collection of bills and granting of credit. The mill notifies the store if a worker has quit or if he and other members of his family are working so irregularly as to endanger their accounts. Usually the store depends upon the employee to come in voluntarily and pay his bills; if he seems disinclined to do so the pay-roll office is instructed to deduct the amount due, such an emergency having usually been provided for by agreement when the account was opened. A few stores operate on the coupon system, the pay-roll office issuing $5 and $10 "books" and deducting the money from the next pay envelope. Other stores, even among those under company control, have

no such arrangement but depend upon the manager's discretion in granting credit.

Among the mills included in this study there are now, or have been, besides the five mentioned above about which the information is not clear, fifty stores of this type which are, or were, wholly part of the mill organization. Altogether they belonged to and served sixty plants. Of these stores thirty were started before 1900, fourteen between 1900 and 1910, five from 1911 to 1920, and only one after 1920. Of the fifty, twenty-four are still operating as regular company stores. The other twenty-six have been disposed of as follows: twenty-one have been given up completely, four have been converted into separate corporations or stores of the type to be discussed presently, and one has become a coöperative store. The dates when they were closed or converted are interesting in comparison with the dates of starting. Only three were closed before 1900, seven between 1900 and 1910, eleven between 1911 and 1920, and five after 1920.

The second type of store is that operated as a separate organization, usually incorporated, of which the mill company or its owners or managers or all three are the stockholders. Seven stores serving ten plants were started on that basis and four others were formed by reorganizations of the older type of company store. Such stores usually have some sort of coöperative agreement with the pay-roll office, issue coupon books, or else open no accounts as their methods of preventing losses.

The third type of store is not really a company store at all. In certain cases the mills have erected store buildings and rented them to private individuals for operation. There are six such stores serving eight plants, to which should be added six more that have been so rented after the closing of a regular company store. There is no financial connection or even understanding between the mill and this type of store. It is usually called the company store by the villagers because such a store was formerly operated in the building, or because it is in a building or group of buildings owned by the mill and often partially occupied by some section of the mill office. Two executives of mills which thus supplied the store buildings mentioned the fact that they require the storekeeper periodi-

cally to submit a report of prices for comparison with prices at nearby stores, explaining that they rent the stores at a nominal figure to insure a source of supply and are not willing that the storekeeper should take undue advantage of his strategic position in the midst of the village, his competitors—if he has any—having to find a location on the edges of the village.

The attitude of the people of the village toward the company store seems to vary greatly. "The people prefer the outside stores"; "we think it best to have nothing to do with the spending of their money"; "there is always some little feeling that the company is trying to squeeze them, even if you are selling as low as or lower than other stores"—the frequency of remarks like these shows that there is dislike for the arrangement in many places. On the contrary, other mills have had the opposite experience. In three cases the management considered that the mill did a great service to the health of the people, who showed their liking for the service by giving practically all their patronage to the company store. One manager even estimated that the store gets a third of the weekly pay-roll in sales. A few stores at mills which have little turnover find that they lose no money, and that the manager knows the character of the individual workers so well that he can grant credit just as any privately operated store can do. In general, however, the unavoidability of debts is a matter of almost universal agreement among company stores: "people move off and leave accounts," and a number of managers added, "they never will come back to that mill to work, whereas if they don't leave a debt they will return sooner or later." One man spoke of an interesting exception to this experience: a worker who had left a bill came back after a long time—a very rare occurrence, he added—and it was suggested that he could now pay it gradually. "But I don't owe that—I moved away!" One mill superintendent of long experience with company stores expressed himself vigorously to the effect that "company stores are a bad thing—lots of people think that they embarrass the company by getting in debt to the store and suppose they will make the mill keep them to get the money." "Don't mind beating the company when they would not beat an individual"; "seem to

think that what they can beat the store out of is sort of due them as wages." So nearly unanimous was experience with the evils of credit that it was not surprising to find that most mills which had discontinued the store had done so because of loss of money. Two or three did so because they saw the bad effects of the workers' acquiring the habit of living on future earnings and hence of having no savings for even the slightest illness or emergency. Two men of long experience with stores pointed out what was probably true in many cases of loss, namely, that all the deficit should not be laid to bad debts, since it is through the store that the mill does most of its relief work and gives most of its aid when the plant is running on short time or is closed entirely. If the store were not in operation, much of this expense would have appeared in some other account, such as wages, orders on other stores, or loans or actual gifts of money or fuel.

From whatever cause—loss of money, nuisance of operation, disbelief in credit, unpopularity with the workers—the fact seems quite clear that the company store is on the decline.

There have been two attempts at coöperative stores among the mills included in this study. The Tolar, Hart, and Holt Mill at Fayetteville started a coöperative store in 1917, the mill providing the necessary capital. The mill management appointed one director and the employees elected two. Profits were to be divided proportionately to the amount each person spent at the store during the year. But the store never made any money, as the directors could not agree on policies and were not experienced enough as storekeepers to prevent waste and loss. When the dull times of 1920 struck the industry the store was closed and rented to a private business man. The other experiment, that of the Chatham Manufacturing Company at Winston-Salem, is considered by the management "about the best thing we have ever done around here." The mill ran a regular company store up until about 1920, but it had never been satisfactory because too many employees got into debt, and the whole plan caused many minor differences and discussions with individual workers. In 1920 the management started the coöperative store. Each employee was given a chance to buy one share at $25 par value. The company has given the use of the store building without rent, and the

company truck delivers bulky goods free. One of the employees, a foreman, is paid $5.00 a week to keep it open an hour in the morning, an hour at noon, and an hour after work. Thus there is very little overhead. The coöperators elect their own directors, who pass on matters of policy. It has been a marked success, the stock increasing greatly in value. If a person wants credit the directors decide whether to grant it or not, so that instead of asking it as a favor from the company such a person is asking for it to the possible detriment of his fellows in the enterprise.

A coöperative store somewhat along the lines of this one was planned by another mill but never actually started, since the mill became bankrupt before it could carry out its plans.

THE MILLS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It has been impossible in a single study to cover all phases of the outside activities of the mills as thoroughly as they might be covered. In addition, for reasons noted in the first chapter, there were individual plants visited where it was impossible even to touch on every point. Since relation to government has less to do with welfare work than many other things, it was most often neglected when a complete study could not be made. The following discussion, therefore, is frankly based on limited information, but it seems wise at least to mention the mills' relation to town government since, in the case of the cotton mills, this relation is somewhat more active than that in which individuals and most other corporations are concerned, and, in some cases, becomes almost an outside activity of the mill.

When the mills were built in the country or outside town limits the only agents of local government with whom they had contact were the county officers. If the villages were of any considerable size they needed more attention in the way of policing than these officers could give. Hence it became customary for the sheriff to deputize one police officer for service there, usually a man recommended by the mill. In some cases it appears that the mill either paid this man's salary direct or refunded the amount to the county. Whether this was done at the suggestion of the mill in order to get

police service, or because the county treasury could not stand the expense, is not clear in enough cases to enable one to make any generalization.

In addition to police service, it is perhaps not out of place to mention the attitudes of the mills toward incorporation of their villages. It is apparent, even from the limited data available, that their attitudes run the full gamut from extreme opposition to entire approval and even enthusiasm. Small towns and cities have been very actively extending their limits since the war, and in the process they have reached out especially for outlying industries which can help them pay for expensive public improvements. This process has gone so far in North Carolina that there are relatively few mills close to towns that have not been taken in; and in some cases the town has taken in a good many acres of corn and cotton fields in order to get the mill. Thus, though suburban mills are still common, it is rather rare now to find a mill village lying close to the built-up section of a town, which is not inside the town's corporate limits. In one case where it remained outside citizens of the town explained that this was so because the manager, besides being the head of the largest single business of the town and influential in the bank, is very popular with the business men of the town as well. None of the men who would have to take the lead in proposing that the mill be brought in wished to do so. But here, while the mill is left outside, there must also be left outside two new residential developments. The small central part of the town feels the heavy weight of its suburbs that do not help in its maintenance. Hence it is unlikely that fear of offending the popular and influential manager will suffice much longer to keep the mill out. The same situation, sometimes reinforced by active opposition on the part of the mill, has not sufficed in many cases recently. Greensboro, Durham, and Statesville, to mention a few outstanding cities, took in the outlying mills over at least some opposition.

The feeling of the mill that has recently been taken into a town is chiefly centered about the taxes. The manager of a mill employing 400 workers said that it cost them $1,000 a month to live inside town limits, and he could not see what benefit they got for it, since the mill had already constructed

water and sewerage systems, concrete sidewalks, and graveled streets. Another mill employing 250 workers has paid additional taxes amounting to $750 a month since it was taken into the town and in addition has to pay for all the grading and graveling done on the streets. "Why, we have to fix a street light that gets broken." The manager of several mills said that after his experience with a plant in the neighboring village he would never locate another mill in a tiny incorporated town. "Although it is so small [employing less than seventy-five workers] they think it must run the town. It pays 80 per cent of the town revenue."

There were some dozen plants within town limits where the managers were rather non-committal on the subject, though it is difficult for the casual observer to see how they benefit by their location. The towns are too small to offer much in the way of public services or urban advantages. Since their sewerage systems, sidewalks, and graveled or sand-clayed streets had been constructed by the mills before coming into the towns, being inside the town was not responsible for these benefits. In one case most of the houses, pleasant, varied, modernly-equipped bungalows, were on each side of a long winding steep street that was more nearly impassable than any street encountered in all the villages visited.

There are some mills which have been within town limits either from their beginning or for so long that the managers probably take the taxes for granted. At some fifteen or sixteen cotton mills and practically all the larger hosiery mills, the town location was held to be an advantage. Opportunity for recreation, amusement, town welfare facilities, and contacts with townspeople in school and church were among the benefits mentioned. A manager, with one mill located inside a small town, another in a tiny incorporated village consisting almost entirely of the mill workers, and others in unincorporated country villages, said that he preferred the town location because of better police protection and better facilities in the way of water and sewerage. "It costs us at that plant [of 100 employees] about $6,000 a year in town taxes. But if you are going to have a town you have to pay for it!" At least one large mill in the state chose to build within town limits because the manager believed the location and contacts

were better for the workers. This case has already been described in the chapter on schools.

Besides these managers with widely divergent views on the advisability of the mills' being drawn into adjoining towns, one finds other groups which differ as widely about the incorporation of the mill village itself. There are several good-sized mill towns in North Carolina which the mill interests have successfully defeated repeated efforts to incorporate. On the other hand, several others of a similar character have been incorporated, probably on the instigation of the mill officials. Certainly such officials would have been influential enough to defeat the change if they had chosen. Finally, there are some dozen incorporated mill towns adjoining other towns; but with them incorporation may be simply a form of insurance against falling within the orbit of the other town.

Almost invariably where it happens that a single company and its village make up the town, local government becomes for practical purposes almost an extra-mill activity. Managers of mills so located often described town elections as "not very live affairs." One manager said he sees to it that elections are held every year in order to retain the charter; another said they had long since ceased to hold elections at all. Here the mill takes care of the streets and sanitation as is done in unincorporated villages. Almost the only evidence of town government is the petty court held by the mayor. As one man remarked: "The mill is the town"; another explained the low town tax rate of ten to fifteen cents per $100 by saying: "We see to it that the expense is kept down"; a third said that the mill-owned section of town is administered somewhat like an unincorporated village but that the town officials are not able to control the bootlegging that goes on in the privately-owned adjoining districts.

EMPLOYEE COMMITTEES AND VILLAGE ALDERMAN PLAN

The movement for employee representation or other similar forms of coöperation is evident in only a few scattered plants in this state. Several mills have tried a village committee to administer relief and other welfare funds. One such mill, a large company, has initiated through its welfare workers a

community club which secures funds by giving plays and selling the handwork of members and by receiving donations from the mill and its owners and officers. This club, through various committees, informs itself of the needs of poor families and of the sick. It sees that they are visited and not only that their actual needs are met but that they have other attentions, even including flowers. Most of this work was formerly done by paid welfare workers. A very small plant that had for over ten years paid a part-time welfare worker from the adjoining town to look after the sick and needy and do general community work, found that interest in cooking and sewing classes had dropped almost to nil. It therefore decided to discontinue the worker and try a committee plan. The superintendent appointed five or six of the "best" women in the village—by which he meant most intelligent, interested, and influential—who formed themselves into a welfare committee to take the lead in village affairs, to keep him informed regarding village needs, to visit the sick, and to recommend cases needing assistance. This plan does not cost as much as the other, for these women serve without pay and the superintendent has been able to create a special benefit fund out of part of the money formerly used for the welfare worker's salary. For the year it has been in effect the plan has worked much better, since the people take more interest and follow the leadership of the committee in their various campaigns better than they supported the welfare worker. There are several other mills which have similar committees in a very simple form and with little or no pretense of election by the people.

One of the criticisms most often made of the mill village economy is that it provides no means of self-expression on local questions, that the mill management sets the tenor of life too completely. A few mills in the South are trying the experiment of aldermen or representatives. There is at least one such experiment in a North Carolina mill, a plant belonging to the Kendall Mills of Boston. Mr. Henry P. Kendall, the president of the company, is very eager to get the villagers interested in their local affairs and to arrange a means of popular control. He has worked out a village alderman plan whereby the village and many matters relating to the dwelling-houses are managed by the employees. It has been in effect some five or

six years in the South Carolina plants of the company, where it is considered quite beyond the experimental stage. It was put into effect at Paw Creek in 1923 soon after the plant was acquired by the company. The management secured the approval of the people of this village by getting the mayor and three aldermen from a South Carolina plant to come up and tell about the plan as it was working there. They made speeches and answered questions and by this means the people at Paw Creek started with a good understanding of the advantages and the spirit of the venture. It has been a real success, and interest has been kept up continuously. At first only the men voted, and there was something of a fight over woman suffrage, with considerable opposition, but it won finally.

This plan calls for a mayor elected by the village as a whole, and nine aldermen, one elected from each block or its equivalent. The manager was elected mayor the first year and one of the overseers the second. Most of the aldermen have been regular rank and file workers—very few of them overseers. To questions as to what kind of men the people elect, the manager replied that nine out of ten have been men whom anyone knowing the village and wanting the best type of leader would pick for the job. There have been a few who at their election seemed less desirable, but in each case they have felt the responsibility and have made good aldermen, so that with them the plan has been doubly beneficial.

Their duties are varied and more or less informal, changing with the local conditions. The manager, Mr. H. K. Hallett, mentioned a few representative matters with which they have dealt from time to time. One of their first tasks was to locate the drunkards, bootleggers, and gamblers and ask the mill to get rid of them. As a result six families had been asked to move by the time the aldermen finished cleaning up the village. They have a morality committee which takes up matters relating to questionable women. They also investigate matters of sanitation and asked the company to provide a rubbish cart to go around the village once a week. Following a mad dog scare, they dealt with dogs running loose; they have made rules to keep chickens shut up during the garden season; they have authorized certain minor repairs to houses in the village. The first year they planned and carried out a Fourth of July cele-

bration, incidentally giving themselves excellent training in preparing and executing plans—"they know now that things don't just run themselves." Recently an appeal was made to the county to help stop the speeding on the county highway that runs through the edge of the village.

Mr. Kendall always does something for the aldermen to show his interest and appreciation upon his occasional visits to the village, and this serves to help make the office stand out as an honor. The local manager is an unusually sincere man, pleasant and likable personally, thoroughly convinced of the value of the plan and interested in it, though he evidently does not try to dominate the situation. No doubt his influence and leadership have made the plan a success. As he well points out, "to make such a scheme successful, the management must be willing to turn over to the people the handling of their village affairs in such a way that they will realize the anxiety of the management to have them handle their own affairs." The fact that the local issues are live and are seriously considered, and that interest in the plan has not flagged would seem to indicate that both management and villagers believe and have acted on the principle that the scheme carries real responsibility and real power.

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

One other experiment also stands alone among the mills of North Carolina but it attracted so much attention during its brief existence that it is perhaps worth describing in some detail here. This is the industrial democracy plan of the Durham Hosiery Mills. The story of its inception, progress, and untimely end are told by Mrs. Joanna F. Sturdivant in *Social Forces* for March, 1926, most of her article being here reprinted by permission.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION PLAN OF THE DURHAM HOSIERY MILLS

JOANNA FARRELL STURDIVANT

This brief study of the Employee Representation Plan of the Durham Hosiery Mills was made with the desire that it

might contribute something, though ever so small, toward the improvement of human relations in industry. A record of the experiences of all those industries in which definite efforts have been made to give employees a voice in matters affecting their employment should be of value to those seeking to restore the personal relations which existed when industry was conducted on a small scale.

The information for this article was gathered from personal interviews with the Carrs, and other stockholders, several foremen and employees, the employment manager of the company, Carrboro and Durham people in general, articles from the *News and Observer*,[2] *Carter's Weekly*,[3] and *Durable Durham Doings*,[4] in addition to knowledge gained by varied experiences for twelve years as neighbor, teacher, community worker, and through other contacts with the people of the Durham Hosiery Mills.

There were thirteen of the mills in the year 1919, when the plan was inaugurated. They were located in Durham, Goldsboro, High Point, Mebane, and Carrboro, the largest number being in Durham. They were largely owned by General Julian S. Carr and his sons.

Mr. Julian S. Carr, Jr., president of the corporation, was the originator of the idea of putting on an organization in which the employee and employer would become a unit where interests were mutual. His idea was, judging from a statement he made to the employment manager, that labor and capital were both sure to suffer soon on account of the reaction in industry which must follow the war, and he desired the employee to know the true conditions. He had always greatly disliked the idea of dual factions, with manager pitted against employee. He said he had no desire to fight unions, but wanted to offer something better. He was not seeking to remedy any existing dissatisfaction, for to all appearance his employees were as contented as could be found anywhere. If they had grievances they had not expressed them, nor asked for a voice in the management. As General Carr expressed it, "It was a

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[2]January 23, 1920.

[3]June 14, 1919.

[4]On file at Duke University.

laboratory experiment to find the solution for the general problem of capital and labor."

While trying to formulate some definite ways and means of bringing his desires to pass, Mr. Carr, Jr., became very much interested in John Leitch's book, *Man to Man.* He made several trips to New York to interview Mr. Leitch. He sent the employment manager to a school in New York City, sponsored by the government, where he studied Human Relationships in Industry for six weeks.

Mrs. Shaw, the personnel director of his own mills, aided him in formulating his ideas.

The foremen, managers, and directors were called together and asked to read Leitch's book. After studying *Man to Man,* they were again called together at a banquet. At the banquet they voted to adopt the plan and invite Leitch to visit the mills. He accepted the invitation, but later called it off on account of sickness and pressing business.

The employment manager called the workers together in the most convenient places possible—usually right in the mills—a few days after the banquet, and explained the plan, and asked all to vote for or against accepting it. Only one vote out of about 3,500 workers was cast against it. A few failed to vote at all.

After the adoption of the plan, an uninfluenced free-thinking committee was appointed to draw up the constitution or policy of the organization. It consisted of three foremen and three employees. They were asked to work out the most suitable plan possible, one that the representatives desired. Nothing was cut out when presented to the president of the corporation. He said that he was willing to pass on anything that two-thirds of his people would ask for, unless it radically endangered the finances of the corporation. The constitution was adopted by the mills in Durham, then carried to the other mills to be passed upon. More than ninety-five per cent favored its adoption.

There was a trade union in the High Point Mills which was not particularly pleased with it, but showed no outright opposition.

THE CONSTITUTION

The business Policy or Constitution followed the Leitch plan in general, with a non-elective Cabinet made up of the chief executives of the company; a non-elective Senate made up of the department heads and sub-foremen; and a House of Representatives elected every six months on a basis of one to every 19 to 45 employees in the department. Five standing committees in both Houses divided the members for work: Justice, Coöperation, Economy, Energy, and Service Committees.

Meetings were held twice a month on the mills' time, their purpose being to give every employee an opportunity to express through his representative his views of the policy of the organization, and to make known any grievance or injustice that may have befallen him. It was the duty of each member to be present at all meetings; if he was not, nor could submit a lawful excuse, the fact was brought before his electors, and they had power to recall him.

A joint meeting of the two Houses could be called, by the presidents, when necessary and the Cabinet or any member of it had the privilege of attending any or all meetings of either House, but had no vote. As a matter of practice, they seldom if ever attended.

Bills originated in either House, and were transmitted to the others. Those rejected or amended were returned to the House of origin with reasons for rejection or amendment. When any bill had passed both Houses with *form, working and intent identical*, it was sent to the Cabinet for its approval, rejection, or amendment.

No bill or amendment to the constitution which might radically affect the finances, working hours, or the progressive policy of the corporation could become effective without the approval of the Cabinet. All bills which would not affect these three things could become effective over the protest of the Cabinet, if passed by a two-thirds majority of the entire membership of both Houses.

No distinction was made in any way on account of religious sect, denomination, or creed.

RESULTS OF THE PLAN

While the plan was functioning, many improvements were put on at the suggestion of the employees, such as fire ladders attached to houses, back porches built, houses painted inside and out, homes lighted with electricity, a club house provided for the meetings, a reading and rest room for all, playgrounds for the children, nurses for full time, basins and paper towels placed in the mills.

Wages were increased through the Senate and Cabinet, at the request of the House of Representatives. Hours of labor were adjusted to suit the majority of workers with little trouble, though at times they argued on account of difference of opinion as to time best suited to all.

Unofficial figures show that in three months after the plan was put into operation, there was an increase in savings of more than $40,000, of which the workers received one-half, less 50 per cent for actual expenses in keeping the plan in operation. (It has been impossible to gain the figures for the savings for the entire time the plan was functioning.)

Most of the employees felt real interest in the plan until wages were cut 25 per cent and the mills went on half time. Practically all of them realized that the corporation was being struck hard with the financial depression when it came. A few lost interest as soon as they found that they could not get everything they wanted, but the majority of the laborers were considerate and reasonable.

The foremen appreciated the plan less than anyone else, because a thorough investigation must be made before help could be hired or fired. It greatly lessened their authority, and made handling the employees a more serious problem than they had considered it. They did not enjoy being reminded frequently that there was a court of appeal to which all trouble would be immediately carried if they did not give a just deal. The Carrs believe the foremen would have learned to appreciate the good sides of the plan, had they been able to have kept it going through the dark days that ended it.

When the foremen complained of the wastage of soap, paper towels, and the number of people that it took to clean up after

the help, they had failed to realize the more valuable things that were being gained.

When time and wages were curtailed to the point that many of the employees were forced to seek employment along other lines, the meetings of the Houses were broken up by non-attendance, and the organization ceased to be. The employees had grown somewhat indifferent, but the managers were sorry it was broken up. It was almost heartbreaking to Mr. Julian S. Carr, Jr., to see his dream of Industrial Democracy become a thing of the past. No efforts were made to revive it, but there might have been when times grew better again, had his own life not been so brief.

Although Industrial Democracy was not absolutely complete in this plan of coöperation, the final power not being passed to employees, but remaining in the management, yet it did good in an imperceptible way. If nothing else lasting was accomplished, it was worth while in that it kept capital and labor on even keel during a turbulent time, when many other industries were going through strikes, lockouts, and other undesirable experiences.

It seems unfair to say the Durham Hosiery Mills "tried out" the Representative Plan and "it failed," since they were struck so quickly and so severely by the reconstruction period that it was impossible to get the plan well established. Unlike the Danville experiment, it had not time to get on foot and prove its true worth. It was in operation little more than one year, but during that brief time the employees were made to realize that the employers for whom they worked were willing to share responsibilities and rewards with their workers.

GARDENS

It is a tradition among the cotton mills of the South that each house shall have its garden space. This custom grew up for several reasons. In the first place, it is a survival from rural conditions under which every house, whether occupied by tenant or owner, had a garden spot—not always tended to be sure, but at least set aside for use. The early mill promoters were, of course, men with an agricultural background and be-

longed to a class who had gardens to supply their tables when and where markets were poor. What was good for master was good for man, since there was little opportunity to buy garden produce. Besides, wages were low and this was a means of making them go further. Land was cheap and the mill usually bought a large tract in order to control its premises, to prepare for expansion, or for other purposes. Finally, one of the chief reasons for gardens has probably been that the people were, and still are, unaccustomed to living near others and dislike houses unless they are at slight distances from one another.

The rôle of the mill in this matter has, in the main, been limited to providing space. Some plants that own more land than is needed for the village proper allow the use of it for gardens and patches, if it is suitable for cultivation. The tenants who have no suitable garden plots beside their houses are provided for in this extra space if they want gardens; others may tend patches there in addition to the garden beside the house. One manager said that his families "can have all the land they will tend—three acres, five acres, if they want it. Some of them have good big potato patches and some raise feed for their cows." Some managers have for many years encouraged the people in tending the gardens by plowing the land at least the first time each spring; some have for fifteen or twenty years given prizes for the best vegetable and flower gardens. Others have for years given seeds for gardens. By far the majority of the executives interviewed, however, made no mention of such activities by the mill. In fact, it will perhaps be surprising to most people to find that not all mill workers' houses have garden space. A few very rough summaries will show the situation, though of course it must be understood that the classifications are quite general and can be only approximations in a matter of such great variety.

Of the 322 mills included in this study seventy-three have no gardens for their works. Fifty of these are hosiery and other specialty textile plants with no company houses and no tradition of housing. At eight the houses, being in good-sized towns, are too close together; two have too many trees; eight are located on too hilly ground; and five are quite new, with rough stumpy ground, making gardens impossible as yet. Secondly,

there are fifty-nine villages in which some—usually a majority—of the houses have garden space but the remainder do not for reasons similar to those of the first class: twelve are in portions of towns too congested for gardens; in thirty-three the mill houses have for some other reason been built close together; seven are on too steep land; three are too shady; and four are too new.

Of the 190 villages remaining all have garden plots at practically every house. It does not follow, however, that all of these are tended. It was impossible to get any accurate figures, for no one in any village knows what proportion of the families "make gardens." Rough estimates made by the executives interviewed were checked by equally rough estimates made by observation in driving about the village. This was not so poor a method as it may seem, since most of the traveling for this study was done in the spring and summer when gardens are at their height. Note was made of some eight odd villages in which the number and quality of gardens were above the average. In about half the cases (forty-six) they were quite noticeably good almost all over the villages.

There are thirty-six plants which now hold out, or have in recent years held out special inducements to encourage gardens. Twelve give prizes, four others once did but have abandoned the practice because inequality in the fertility of the gardens made it unfair and caused ill-feeling, or because "the same ones got it all the time." A few mills plow the gardens for the first time in spring, but some have discontinued this because of dissatisfaction with the time chosen or with other details. Four or five have encouraged gardening by maintaining canneries. Two managers mentioned setting out fruit trees at each house under the charge of welfare workers. There is a great difference in the experiences of villages with the workers' use of gardens and there is consequently a wide diversity of opinion regarding them. Some executives consider that there is less gardening done now than formerly because of the ease with which produce and canned goods can be secured and because the common use of the automobile has taken so much of the people's leisure time. Others think that gardens are more common because of their encouragement by prizes and other devices. Several said that they are not so common now as dur-

ing and just after the war when there was so much publicity on the subject.

Mill gardens are usually limited to corn, cabbage, snaps, and a few other easily raised summer vegetables; fall and winter gardens are rare and are made up almost entirely of turnips and collards. The mill garden, like the farm tenant garden, is a simple affair and as an aid to the family budget is not very dependable.

OTHER OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES OF MILLS

There are a multitude of other outside activities carried on by the mills, some rather generally, others quite rarely. For example, the sale of wood and coal to employees at cost is a very common service, and it has come to be so taken for granted as a mill activity that even many hosiery mills, which seldom undertake other activities and which have no yard space for storing fuel, make arrangements with a local wood and coal dealer to let their employees have fuel at lower than the regular commercial rates, the mills guaranteeing that all bought by their employees will be paid for.

Several companies use savings plans, each operated after a fashion of its own. Sometimes the worker simply brings his savings to the office as he might to a savings bank, and the company pays him interest at a higher rate than the savings bank rate. In two companies, including fifteen plants, the employee signifies his wish to have a certain sum deducted regularly from his pay, in one case it being deposited in a savings bank at 4 per cent interest and in the other used by the company at their preferred dividend rate of 7 per cent. Some of these savings plans were inaugurated ten or fifteen years ago, usually as a hobby of some older owner or officer of the company. Their purpose is to encourage thrift and make it easier for the employees to save. The workers receive their pay in cash and are seldom out of the mill during banking hours; few of them have the habit of using banks and many are suspicious of them. There are objections to savings plans by both employers and employees, especially when money is taken out of the pay envelope: the men tend to feel that they are receiving only the amount that is actually handed to them each

week; it is a great deal of trouble to make the deductions and keep the accounts; and in one case at least the suspicion was expressed by some of the workers that the company was trying to find out how little they could live on so that it could cut wages. One plant found that many workers drew their savings out as soon as they had collected enough to make a moderate payment on a Ford car, and the company's enthusiasm for the savings plan thereafter waned considerably.

Two companies including eight plants operate dairies, selling milk to their employees at cost. The Mansfield Mills at Lumberton, which have had their dairy long enough to have brought it well beyond the experimental stage, are still enthusiastic about it. "The best thing we do here for the people is in operating the dairy," the management declared. The venture started in 1910 with four cows to furnish milk for the babies of the village. It has gradually grown until now they have fifty cows and a big modern dairy with milking machines, separators, and refrigeration. They have not had a case of typhoid since the dairy was started, thought it was present before. They still make a specialty of milk for babies, and the National Ayreshire Association, of which they are members, furnishes them with booklets and educational matter to distribute, teaching the value of milk for babies and how to use it. They have added Jerseys as the dairy became popular for general use, 40 per cent of the families of the village now taking milk regularly. More recently they have added chickens so that they can furnish fresh eggs to the village through the store. They also plant all spare parts of the farm in vegetables and berries for sale fresh through the store.

Three mills run small ice plants, both of them because ice had to be brought some distance and was sold to the villagers at a high rate. The manager of one of these mills considers that he did a good piece of educational work a few years ago in arranging, through the company store, a sale of refrigerators at cost to encourage the people to use them. About half the families in the village bought them. In many villages the number of families that take ice is rather surprising. As has been said, most of the traveling for this study was done in summer, and in riding about the villages the number of little dial cards hung out for the iceman was noticeable; in the better

type of village almost every house would have such a card.

Two plants, both of them large knitting mills in the midst of good-sized towns, operate cafeterias. They have no company houses, employ mostly women and girls from all parts of the towns, and have, in general, the problems not of the cotton mill of North Carolina but of the industrial plant of the North or East. A few plants which operate at night have small lunch counters, selling fruit, sandwiches, milk, coffee, and bottled drinks in the mill for the night force. In most plants the employees live near enough to go home to dinner, though in some many workers have their meals brought to the mill in baskets and buckets. Usually this is done by the children. In towns where it is common, the school defers to the custom by closing at midday early enough to allow the children to go home, get the dinner, and reach the mill with it by the time of the noon whistle. Often this service is performed for several families by some superannuated worker or other person unable to work in the mill. Some plants in which there are a number of employees who cannot go home at noon have fitted up rooms for their use, but this is rather rare. They usually eat on the mill lawn, in the sunshine or under the trees depending on the season, and in bad weather, at their work places or in one of the many open spaces in the mill.

One or two mill executives mentioned the fact that their mills have parks with band stands and some playground equipment for the children; three others had plans for parks. A great many have built boarding houses and in some cases have furnished them, but the custom is to rent them at the same nominal rates as the other houses and assume no further responsibility, except sometimes seeing that the private individuals who operate them do not charge over a certain rate. One new model village provides a substantial brick boarding house with baths, lavatories in each room, steam heat, and a large lobby or sitting room with two fireplaces. The weekly rate which is charged just about pays for board alone. One of the older mills in a small country village, rather isolated and inaccessible, uses a large, homelike residence with plenty of magnolias, shrubs, and old-fashioned flowers as a home for the girls who have to board. As the cost is only three dollars a week for room and board—"and they get good substantial food

too"—it is easy to see that this boarding house has to be subsidized. Two other mills maintain boarding houses, each hiring a matron and being responsible for any deficits. One large group of mills manages a home for office workers on this basis. One company which has owned no mill boarding houses has long had the policy of lending money to persons—usually employees—who want to build boarding houses. In its forty-odd years of existence it has helped in this way to build "a good many houses." In general, the mill boarding house provides slightly better accommodations than the average homes. It usually has running water even if the homes do not; if all houses have running water and sewerage the boarding house usually has a bath as well. But it is often a rather bare affair. The boarders are highly transient and do not demand much in the way of frills; the keeper is usually limited as to charges, not only by the ability of the boarders to pay, but quite definitely by the mill. As the keeper must feed a group of working people, predominantly men, whose appetites are robust, to say the least, she has little left for luxuries. Of the eight or ten mill boarding houses which the writer knows personally, the food ranks in quantity, quality, and wholesomeness, if not in variety, style, or service, on a level with that of far higher-priced houses.

As has already been noted in an earlier chapter, most of the larger and better-equipped community houses have shower baths, usually for both men and women. In other villages the smaller community house or the business block owned by the mill, houses a barber shop, which often provides shower and tub baths equipped by the mill and rented as a part of the barber shop. Most of the time only the men use these, paying various rates for the privilege. The Statesville Cotton Mill is unique among the mills visited in providing a bath house in the mill. It has equipped this with a dozen tubs and showers, and hot water is supplied from the boiler room. The men and women use them on alternate days. There is no charge. The manager thinks this service is much used and appreciated.

The Durham Hosiery Company published a company paper for several years before 1920, distributing it free to all employees, but it was discontinued when the whole welfare department was closed. The Carolina Cotton and Woolen Mills

Company has for some six years published an active weekly paper, the cost being mainly borne by the employees through subscriptions and by advertising. The Kendall Mills share in the publication of a paper issued for the North and South Carolina plants of the company.

It would be impossible to make a list of all the miscellaneous outside activities of the mills included in this study, or even to discover them. As has been suggested, many experiments have been tried, only to be abandoned and forgotten. Others, even current experiments, were not remembered by the person interviewed, a fact proved by reference made to some of them by a neighboring mill or by some citizen of the town. Perhaps enough have been mentioned to show two things: that these activities are highly varied and scattered and grew up to meet local needs or as a result of some executive's hobby; and second, that taking the mills as a whole, organized and planned schemes are comparatively rare. Speakers and writers both friendly and unfriendly to the mills have tended to list all kinds of activities they have heard of with either a flourish of approval or a critical comment. Both have conveyed the idea that such things are very much more common than they really are.

INFORMAL AND PERSONAL ACTIVITIES

There is one field in which it would be difficult to exaggerate the extent of outside activities, namely, the informal relations between the mill executive and the employees with their calls for relief, loans, aid, advice, and all sorts of special personal attentions. We have already seen many such relations in connection with school, church, community work, health, and other activities; but the field is mentioned here in order to give some examples which fall in none of the others, and in order to emphasize the fact that such activities are extremely general and cover the widest possible ground. One of the most common is the loan of money in cases of sickness or for other reasons. Usually such loans are made only to employees considered trustworthy. Many mill managers volunteered the information that they make such loans, others when asked said they did, and, judging from their general policy in other matters, some that were not asked probably do also. The heads of a few

small mills said they make such loans personally instead of through the mill. This conformed to the idea so frequently stated in connection with the stores, namely, that the people consider a debt to a person more binding than a debt to the company. Wherever the matter of loans was discussed the question as to whether the money was repaid was always asked. There was a remarkable unanimity in the managers' declarations that it was. Of course, when the mill itself rather than the executive makes the loan there can always be an agreement as to deducting so much every week from the pay envelope. But debtors could very easily move away to escape such payment. Most mill executives stated with some pride that they had lost nothing, or very little, in this way. Loans are made for every conceivable reason, from sending a member of the family to the hospital to buying a cow that shall provide milk for a baby; for funeral expenses or for sending a boy or girl to college; for setting up housekeeping or for a new suit of clothes—"You see the mill has been on short time, and he is a young fellow and likes to keep his end of it up," was the rather apologetic explanation of this last occasion.

RELIEF AND CARE OF OLD WORKERS

Minor relief work is in general one of the duties of the community worker. In villages which have no workers, it is often the personal concern of the superintendent or the manager of the company store, if there is one. Alongside of these direct methods of mill relief stands the collection of money by employees for one another. Some friends of a family needing help will circulate a paper asking for pledges to be paid at the next pay day. Sometimes these friends will collect the money; sometimes it is agreed to turn the list of pledges over to the paymaster, who takes the individual amounts out of the signers' envelopes.[5] In this "passing of the hat" the executives are usually included. And while such contributions are usually

[5]This is an interesting commentary on "taking out" money. Though a very unpopular practice in many plants and industries, there seems to be little objection to it in the cotton mill, probably because the workers are used to it in connection with rent, wood, coal, coupon books at stores, etc.

personal, the workers and the executives both recognize that they are somewhat *ex officio* and that the amount given should bear some proportionate relation to the importance and income of the giver.

This method of carrying on relief is variously viewed by the mill executives. One manager said that it is the chief method used in his village and that it is very popular with the people, "for they are great folks to help one another and they know we will finish making up whatever amount is needed." At the other extreme were two or three managers who specifically said that they allowed "no papers to be carried around in the plant"; that they have agents and arrangements for relief; that they consider it a part of their business and "don't want the rest of the help taxed for it." In between these were various degrees of approval or disapproval. Sometimes the employees' as well as the employers' enthusiasm for this method is dampened by a misuse of the funds. A collection was taken, for example, for one poverty-stricken family which had just buried one member and had another very sick. The village was scandalized to find that the father had spent $25 of the $40 subscribed for a much coveted coon dog. But such cases are evidently rare, or the abuses would discourage even the mill worker, who is proverbially a Good Samaritan.

Closely related to these informal methods of relief is the care of superannuated workers. In an industry which makes such a point of "taking care of its people" it may be surprising that so little provision is made for the old employee. The few insurance schemes which have a total disability clause are negligible as regards the problem as a whole. As a matter of fact, several conditions have combined to minimize the need of formal or definite arrangements for such care. In the first place, it is the opinion of many, based on observation if not on statistical proof, that a large number of the older people return to the farms. When the eyesight of the weaver begins to fail, or the quickness or strength of the man in various other skilled occupations is reduced, he begins to drop in the scale to unskilled, more poorly paid jobs. Sometimes he has invested his savings in a little farm; sometimes he has children or near relatives to whom he can go; sometimes he is still vigorous enough for farming as a tenant. In any of these situations the

chances are that he permanently leaves the mill. This solution of the problem of old age will in all probability decrease in importance as the mills are increasingly manned by persons growing up in the industry who have had no farm experience. The tendency towards more scientific farming will help to make it less practicable.

In the second place, the mobility of mill families results in breaks in their service records. Naturally, the feeling of responsibility on the part of a mill in which a worker happens to give out, even though he may have been a lifelong textile operative, is not very strong if he has been at that place for only a short while. Thirdly, old people, unless they are helpless or sick, are not the burden that they become under many conditions. In fact, they are often welcome, because they make it possible for younger mothers to work in the mill. The standard of living is such that most families can take in an additional member without being compelled to rent a larger house.

All these things mean that the number of people for whom the mill feels responsible, or who have themselves no solution, however poor, for their problems, is reduced to a minimum. Those few who remain are dealt with variously. There are a few jobs about every mill which can be filled by old men. One seldom sees, for example, any but an elderly, often quite feeble, man serving as gatekeeper. There are few jobs for elderly women, though plants which finish their products have some thread-clipping and other suitable work. The writer has seen women who were anything but strong and vigorous operating spoolers. Since this is piece work, such an operative makes very little, though this may mean her living. Unless some special reason exists for pressure toward production, there is considerable leniency toward the worker who cannot keep her spooler going at full capacity as there is no waste except the power. The managers of several mills visited during this study told of employees with unusually long service records who "have the run of the mill and work when they want to and feel like it." Workers with records of less remarkable length are probably not so favored. One hears occasionally of persons being summarily dismissed after years on the same job. Such casualties are the natural accompaniment of a system of line

organization in which the foreman has a good deal of power over his workers.

Besides giving them jobs suited to their strength, the chief method of taking care of superannuated workers is to allow them to live in their houses rent free. They are also aided with occasional gifts of wood and coal, and, in case of sickness, with medical attention and supplies. Like so many other phases of mill welfare work, this help is on an informal personal basis. It is more or less casual, spasmodic, dependent on the character of the manager, and even on the personal *rapport* between him and the individual worker. These characteristics it shares with any system of care for superannuated workers short of a public old age pension.

CONCLUSION

In practically every interview which was not hurried and in which discussion became informal and conversational, the mill executive related instances of various kinds to illustrate the value of certain outside activities, or to show how their scheme worked or did not work. Incidentally, they showed a very detailed knowledge of the workers and their families and of their life and problems. Many revealed facts which showed that the employees come to the head executive for all sorts of advice, from how to invest their savings to how to manage an unruly boy or girl. A man asked a manager's advice as to whether he should marry a certain woman, and a mother-in-law appealed to the acting executive of the mill to see to it that her son-in-law cater a bit to his wife's taste. Frequent calls for loans to meet funeral expenses made one manager aware that the undertakers were charging outrageous prices for coffins and services. Afterwards when an employee came to him for advice or for money to pay a bill he would offer to deal with the undertaker. Gradually this became customary, and now he does so at the time of almost every death in the village. In this way he saves many dollars, and apparently the quality of the undertaking service is satisfactory, since the workers are under no compulsion to deal with the undertaker through the manager.

There are many people who object to this whole personal atmosphere in the mill village. To them such activities—es-

pecially such a great body of little things in every-day life—constitutes, at its worst, unwarranted control and despotism, and at its best, paternalism. An analysis of the feelings of the employees would require a kind of research radically different from that used to secure these present data. The situation indicated by the facts gathered here can perhaps be well summarized in the remarks made very frequently by managers and owners to cover all such miscellaneous services and activities among their employees: "We see that they don't suffer," or "We take care of our people," or "they feel that they can come to us for anything." And similar remarks as to the relation between the operatives and the employers were made almost as often by mill community workers, teachers, school principals, preachers, public welfare officers, Y.M.C.A. workers, and the ordinary citizens of the towns. The fact that such machinery, formal and informal, is used by the employers is an indication that there is a large body of opinion in the village which agrees with much public opinion outside—that it is all a good thing. There are often comments to the effect that one or another such activity is regarded without appreciation, with suspicion, or with downright hostility. This may be taken as proving equally well that there is in some villages, and probably in all to a greater or less degree, a minority opinion against these things. It may be dislike of the personality and methods of the executive and his agents; it may be disgust over a poor choice of activities; it may be a conscious or subconscious rebellion against the basis and the connotation of dependence which such a system suggests. It may be something of all these. Certainly it is not for an observer to read his answer into the question out of a different background and habit of thought. The facts are a matter for research to discover from among the people themselves.

CHAPTER X

THE MILLS AND HOUSING

Early in their history in England the cotton mills started building houses for their employees. Mills in New England and the South—and now in the Orient—have followed the custom for one or the other of two main reasons: Most of the mills were built in isolated places where there was no available labor supply and no town to house the newly attracted workers; those that were built in towns or cities found that the existing housing was not sufficient to take care of the rapid expansion, and this fact gave rise to abuses and profiteering by landlords.

EXTENT OF HOUSING

From all procurable accounts of the early mills in North Carolina it appears that they housed all their employees except members of neighboring farm or village families. How large a proportion constituted this class is unknown. The custom has been followed continuously and more or less consistently, so that the idea has become current in the state that all mills house all their employees. This idea is assumed to be a fact in discussion of mill building and overhead costs, of wages and cost of living, of village control and paternalism. The scope of this survey was too general and it was too much in the nature of an introductory study to go into every desired detail as to housing. The facts procured, however, do suggest that there are exceptions enough to the universal rule of company housing among North Carolina mills to make a more complete study profitable, for the following classifications and figures are based merely on approximations as to the numbers of employees, on rough estimates of the percentages that are housed by each company, on guesses as to the average number of workers per house. Such sketchy data are all that a mill executive—or anyone else—has at present. More accurate information will require a tedious compilation from

records which only incidentally have to do with houses and employees and in many cases will require actual surveys of villages.

Such data as were available seem to indicate that the mills included in this study fall into several classes as regards their housing activities. The first class, made up of thirty-nine mills, provide no housing. Of these, thirty are hosiery mills and nine are miscellaneous textile manufacturing plants, making products such as silk, rugs, shirts, and other things. Altogether they employ 5,950 workers. Many of the hosiery mills are in furniture and tobacco towns and employ the daughters and wives of furniture and tobacco workers who rent from private landlords or, in some cases, own their homes. Some of the smaller plants in little country towns employ the casual female labor scattered among the poorer families of the village. In all cases the town or village labor supply is supplemented by girls and women from the country for miles around. These mills were usually built in their present locations because of the availability of labor. They had no need to build houses, and there is no tradition of housing in their line of business. Indeed, the work of the hosiery mill is not so well adapted to employing whole families, and hence to housing schemes, as that of the cotton mill.

A second group, of nineteen plants, is made up of seventeen hosiery and two miscellaneous mills which house from 20 per cent to 50 per cent of their workers. Altogether they employ 2,800 hands. Some of the smaller mills have as few as three or four houses. Their reasons for building dwellings were varied: one "just happened to own a few as a real estate venture"; the chief owner of another is in the lumber business and built homes cheaply to insure having workers in a very small town; a third, a hosiery mill located in the edge of a town very much as a cotton mill might be, found it desirable to have at least some houses; five or six are in small villages which do not of themselves provide enough labor. One gathers that in all of these cases it was as a matter of convenience, in order to be able to employ a likely applicant or to hold a few key workers, that these mills went thus tentatively into the housing business. Certainly they did not seem to take housing very seriously. Ten of these plants, employing 1,016 workers

among them, have 156 houses altogether. On a basis of two workers per house [1] they provide for somewhat fewer than one-third of their workers.

A third group, containing seventy-two cotton mills, house from 40 per cent to 85 per cent. In these plants the managers are aware of the fact that they do not house all the employees. They know that one-fourth or more own houses or rent from private landlords. The plants of this group employ 15,165 workers and have 4,387 houses. On a basis of two workers per house this group can house 56 per cent of the total number of their workers.

A fourth class, in which are seventy-one cotton mills, claim to house from 85 per cent to 100 per cent of the workers and appear to have enough houses with which to do it. They employ 14,630 workers and have 6,729 houses. On a basis of two per house the group can house 92 per cent of all their employees. The managers of many of these mills know that they get an average of two and a half or three workers from each house; on the other hand, some in this group know that they get fewer than two. Wherever the number was known, it was used; when not known, the average of two per house was used.

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[1]This average of two per house was adopted for several reasons. One group of mills which the writer knows has made careful count owns various kinds of plants—new, old, regular, specialty with high, medium, and low wage scales, some with improved machinery and others with older types. All these factors modify the type of worker and their standard of living. These mills find that in their houses as a whole they average .48 workers per room. As the average house has four rooms this gives about two workers per house. Moreover, mill executives who had made more or less casual counts found that they secured two workers per house more often than any other number. When they secured more it was usually because the houses averaged more than four rooms, or because they put some sort of premium on taking boarders, such as giving one room rent free to each worker from a house, or because the general living standard of the village was low. When they secured fewer it was often because they had plenty of workers without any premium or pressure, or because the general standard of living was at least average, and generally above the average. Thirdly, findings of J. J. Rhyne, *Case Studies in Mill Village Population* (Unpublished Thesis: University of North Carolina, 1927), relating to 500 North Carolina mill families, indicate the following averages in five villages: 1.68, 1.98, 2, 2.07, and 2.59 workers per house. It would appear from this that two is about the average.

A fifth class, comprising eighty-one cotton mills, claim to house over 85 per cent, and most of them over 90 per cent, but apparently have houses for considerably less than that proportion. If they average more than two workers per house a number of these plants would move up into the fourth class, though it is difficult to see how any considerable number of mills would average more than two unless their regular tenements are supplemented by several boarding houses. This group employs 18,032 workers and has 5,831 houses. On a basis of two workers per house they can house only 65 per cent of the total number. On this same basis, individual mills of the group range from 37 per cent to 82 per cent.

There is left a final group of twenty-nine plants employing 10,250 workers upon which the data are too incomplete to place them in their proper classes. All plants in this group do some housing. The range is probably about the same as for the other groups, varying from four hosiery plants, which house fewer than one-fourth of their workers, to three isolated rural cotton mills that claim to, and probably do, house almost all of theirs.

Totals made up of such widely divergent items are of course inaccurate, but perhaps if we keep this warning in mind the following figures may prove somewhat useful. Of the 293 plants upon which information on this point is complete, 254 do some housing. The mills in this group employ 48,844 workers and have 17,105 houses. On a standard basis of two workers per house—and whatever its limitations when applied to any single mill this figure is probably very nearly correct when applied to so many—these 254 mills house 70 per cent of the total number of their workers.

TYPES OF HOUSES

The type of house erected by the cotton mills of North Carolina has changed greatly during the hundred years in which the mills have been running. The old villages were made up of log houses, usually of two rooms though sometimes with a separate kitchen in addition. The mill at Spray built by Governor Morehead in 1839 had housing features which were different from the general type of log house. Most of its

houses were framed even at that early date, though it had a few of brick, the only instances of brick houses encountered in this study save at one mill built in the eighteen-eighties and at another built in the nineteen-hundreds. This mill also had a "long house," a series of attached tenements. The next oldest attached houses were the brick dwellings just referred to, and after them we find only very occasional instances until we come to recent experiments with double modified bungalows.

The few scattered mills built from 1840 to the early eighties constructed houses of various designs. All were framed but a good many of them seem to have had the weatherboarding put on vertically with narrow strips to cover the cracks. There are still a few of this type in most old villages and an occasional one at mills built in the eighteen-nineties. Some were two-story houses with small lean-to rooms at the back and two rooms upstairs, though occasionally there are some that appear to have only one room upstairs. These styles usually have irregular or broken roof lines, which are quite pleasing. Many of them have chimneys of stone or brick on the outside, and these, with the old-fashioned roof slanting low at the back over shed rooms, give a quaint and solid appearance quite different from the impermanent look of some of the later box-like little houses perched on high pillars. Many of these early houses were not ceiled or plastered. Several executives mentioned having made these improvements in recent years.

Before the eighties there were also some simple cottages being built—of two rooms separated by a narrow hall, with a wing or L comprising one room or sometimes two, behind one of the front rooms. This style proved to be the most popular for nearly twenty years because it was adapted to the two sizes most needed and was simple and easy to build. During the late eighties and nineties, with an occasional example as late as 1912, there was a period of building the plain two-story, five or six-roomed houses like those built on the farms at the same time, though the latter were usually of somewhat more generous proportions than the mill houses. Some eighteen or twenty mills built most of their houses in this style, with some three-roomed cottages to supply the needs of smaller families.

In the nineteen-hundreds the chief variation from the cottage type was a modified cottage of four rooms with the roof extending over both front and back porches, with no hall, with one chimney providing fireplaces in the two main or front rooms, and with two front and two back doors. Some of this type have been built ever since 1920. Not long after this type appeared, it was followed by the square-topped house that is now seen in so many villages. This has four rooms with a hall through the middle and a pyramid-shaped roof. Sometimes the hall is omitted and a single chimney rises at the apex of the pyramid.

This square-topped house may have resulted from the beginning of the bungalow influence. Certainly mill houses built since about 1915 have, with few exceptions, some features of the bungalow. This tendency was increased greatly during the war by the sale of ready-cut houses. Some new mills, and many older ones that wished to expand in order to keep up with the rushing business, were unable to get material and labor, and so bought Aladdin and similar houses. These were nearly always bungalows. This impetus was continued and increased after the war by the predominance of bungalows in residential building and especially by the rapid rise of the real estate development in which companies would build large numbers of slightly varied small bungalows for sale. At this time mills might be found employing architects to plan their villages—the same sort of man who was planning the real estate development. It is small wonder that some of the newer mill villages look like real estate projects and that the managers of the mills are proud of the fact.

This tendency of the mill managements to follow the current style in houses has resulted in at least some variety among the villages. For there are few mills in North Carolina that have been in operation for any considerable time which have not added somewhat to their capacity, making more houses necessary. Or else the rising standards of living have resulted in the mills' getting seldom more than two workers from each house instead of one worker per room as used to be the rule, which likewise would oblige them to build more houses. Unfortunately for appearance's sake, most of these additions in a different style have been built near together on a lengthened

or a newly opened street, so that even a village containing three or four types of dwellings rarely escapes the monotony of groups of almost identical houses. A few managements decided that the lots first laid out were too large and have inserted a newer house of a different style between each two old ones. The resulting variety is pleasing but is possible in only a small number of villages, since such sandwiching usually puts families closer to one another than they like to be and eliminates garden space. Lots range in size from 50 x 150 feet to 100 x 200 feet. The most frequent size is 75 x 150.

More important as far as permanent improvement in the appearance of the villages is concerned are the very obvious efforts of mill managements to differentiate the houses. In the older villages, where the houses are all alike, the best that can be done is to vary the painting. There are very few villages among those visited that do not show some effort of this sort —different colors, different trims, different combinations of color and trim. In the newer villages there are all sorts of efforts at variety: houses of the same general style will have their porches or roofs or gables varied, or care will be taken that among four or five styles of houses no two alike shall be placed next to each other. Unfortunately, real variety is often lost by a repetition of colors or styles at quite regular intervals, which merely preserves the monotony according to a larger pattern.

True variety is reached only when—as in a few villages included in this study—care has been taken that all houses, even of the same size, are varied in the design of porch and roof, in the material used on the outer walls (boards, shingle, or stucco) as well as in color, and, in addition, that no two nearly alike are built within sight of each other.

This question of monotony in the appearance of the mill houses has had a great deal more attention than its importance merits. To anyone who has ever become accustomed to, or even seen, the rows upon rows, streets upon streets, of identical houses in Northern and Eastern cities, throughout working class areas and wealthier sections alike, the monotony of identical houses in the mill villages is greatly broken by the spaces between them capable of being utilized for vines and flowers and vegetable gardens and often filled with them. And

certainly the workers do not seem to worry about the deadly sameness. The writer knows personally of families who have requested as a favor to be allowed to move from an individualized little Aladdin bungalow to one in a row of ten or twelve identical houses, because the latter was nearer the mill or had larger—though fewer—rooms, or for other reasons. Long personal acquaintance with some mill workers and a casual acquaintance with many has not brought to the writer's ears a single remark showing protest against, or even distaste for, living in a house like others in the row. And yet this is the one aspect of the cotton mill village that has been most criticized by local and Southern writers and citizens and even by commentators from sections that have the same monotony in housing. Reference will be made to this fact and its results in a later chapter. Suffice it to say here that, after all, the monotony of the average mill village is not alone due to identical houses but to similarity in many details of the village pattern: the houses are all about the same size; they are set back precisely the same distance from the streets; they are all in about the same state of repair or disrepair; they often have no flower gardens or other touches of individuality; the very trees lined up and down the streets are all of the same kind and the same size, since, with the disregard for trees common among all classes in North Carolina, the mill owners have often cleared away a natural growth to make room for the village and have then transplanted a variety of tree considered more suitable for shading human habitations. Some of the villages where this has been done are now old enough for the trees to yield pleasant shade—and another touch of uniformity. Fortunately there has been a decided change in this practice, and more recently planned mill villages have followed the fashion set by the real estate developments by cutting away only those trees necessary for houses and streets, leaving all natural growth, even though it consist only of pines or blackjacks.

One other feature of the mill village which has detracted from its appearance resulted from the location of the mills at the rapids in streams. Such rapids occur where the rivers are descending from hills or mountains to plateaus or from plateaus to plains, and are surrounded for some distance by hilly

land. In order to have the village near the mill it must be built on these rugged slopes where there is seldom enough level space for a single house, to say nothing of a row. Neither the finances of the mills allowed, nor the fashion of the day and the district demanded, that the lots be leveled and the hills terraced to accommodate the cottages. As a result many if not most of the houses at the water power mills have been built with one side touching the ground and the other resting on slender brick pillars sometimes four or five feet high. Indeed, most mills in the Piedmont section have built at least a part of their villages on irregular land, where the same awkward and unlovely arrangement is to be found. The use of high pillars where they were necessary may have tended to cause their use everywhere; or it may have been supposed that to have the houses raised two or three feet from the ground was more healthful or protected the timbers better; whatever the reason, the fact is that in many villages built even on fairly level ground the pillars are rather high. Perhaps their height is more noticeable because of the absence of any curtain wall between them. This again is the result of several factors—cost, climate, and custom. Cellars are not absolutely necessary in this climate and though they might be an advantage are rarely built in houses even of double the cost of these. Until very recently houses belonging to people of much higher economic classes were seldom completely underpinned, and this is still true of older houses in the rural districts. It is hardly so noticeable among such houses, however, since the building lots in towns are more often leveled and the country owner selects as level a place as possible for his house. These long-legged mill houses, perched precariously on the hillsides, give the stranger at once an unpleasant impression, and there have been many descriptions of the villages in which this feature has figured. Many mills are beginning to lessen if not to eliminate it by filling in the spaces underneath with board or lattice or even brick curtain walls. Almost every new village and new groups of houses in old villages are built with full brick underpinning. This alone adds a great deal to the appearance of a village and is a detail to which attention is called by the managers with a pride equal to their satisfaction in having varied bungalows or running water. To be sure,

these same hills prevent a monotony that is present to a greater degree in the level villages and render it impossible to construct the houses in straight rows. And now that some attention is being paid to laying out streets and placing houses with better reference to the slope of the land, the irregular sites are becoming advantageous as far as appearance is concerned.

SIZE

Forty years ago there were many two-roomed houses in mill villages, though the most common size was probably three rooms, except for the comparatively few mills that were experimenting with five and six-roomed, two-story houses. Gradually the size of the houses has increased until the average now is four rooms, which most of the houses have. The average will continue to rise, for almost every village built recently has more five and six-roomed than three-roomed houses and there are some half a dozen where the houses average five rooms. Thus out of seventy-three representative plants the distribution of the average sizes is as follows: in six villages the houses average three rooms; in eleven they average over three but less than four; in forty-five, four and less than five; twelve average five rooms, and one averages six. The distribution of sizes within a single village is of course wide. The following villages are representative:

I				III			
3	houses	—	2 rooms	31	houses	—	3 rooms
50	houses	—	3 rooms	31	houses	—	4 rooms
20	houses	—	4 rooms	42	houses	—	5 rooms
73	average 3.2			104	average 4.2		

II				IV			
2	houses	—	2 rooms	31	houses	—	3 and 4 rooms
40	houses	—	3 rooms	15	houses	—	5 rooms
26	houses	—	4 rooms	2	houses	—	6 rooms
3	houses	—	5 rooms	2	houses	—	7 rooms
1	house	—	6 rooms				
72	average 3.5			50	average 4.2		

Mills having two-roomed houses are now rare. The writer expressed surprise that one very new mill had a few, where-

upon the manager explained that these were for Negro employees, "You couldn't get anybody else to live in them." Nearly all mills have some three-roomed houses. They are popular with newly married couples and small families who do not want to take boarders. Because of this demand, one mill, which had two-story, five and six-roomed houses almost exclusively, recently built new dwellings with three rooms. Having some three-roomed houses the mill can afford to provide a house for a family which furnishes only one worker, even if he is not highly skilled. Conversely, the family will not be paying rent for a room that it does not urgently need, for strange as it may seem with the rent at such a nominal figure, the average mill family seems to want a house no larger than is quite necessary and is inclined to take boarders if there is any extra space, especially in boom times when work and applicants are plentiful. At such times there is also considerable doubling up of families in four-roomed or larger houses. The writer has known of many such instances and several managers interviewed said that it is fairly common in their villages. One said he had a hundred families in eighty-eight houses, though business was only normal. To be sure, this village had a great many six-roomed, two-story houses and these, he said, were the ones in which two families lived. Sometimes the initiative for this doubling up comes from the families concerned, in order to save rent, to make it possible for friends or relatives to get jobs in the mill, to have someone remaining in the house to care for small children so that the mother can work, or simply because their standard of living permits it. In other cases the pressure undoubtedly comes from the mill, due to the starting of a night shift which it is believed will be too temporary to justify building houses, or because of a reluctance to provide a full-sized house to a family that furnishes only one semi-skilled or unskilled worker. The result in any case is overcrowding and a lowering of standards, since such houses are not built for the use of two families, and of course no interior changes are made for such. A careful study, comprising a house-to-house survey and interviews with occupants and with executives on each individual case, is the only way in which the full truth as to this situation and its obscurer causes can be secured.

EQUIPMENT AND RENTS

Houses belonging to mills included in this study vary greatly in conveniences and equipment. There are two villages composed of little unpainted cottages perched on long and short pillars up and down steep hillsides, with no electric lights and with pumps to provide a water supply. At the other extreme are three or four villages of pleasant, varied, five and six-roomed bungalows fully underpinned with brick, lighted by electricity, supplied with well-equipped bathrooms and sewerage, rift-pine floors, and window screens. The other villages fall somewhere between these. There are ten plants at which the houses are not wired for electricity. They have 665 houses and employ 1,490 workers. One of them, the largest in the group, was putting in electric lights at the time of the visit. Another, a city mill, furnishes running water—sinks in the kitchens and sewerage—the only mill in this lower group having any modern conveniences. Two of these charge no rent; three charge about ten cents a room a week; one, fifteen cents a room a week; and three, twenty-five cents a room a week. Information is incomplete on the remaining plant. In point of age three of them are among the oldest in the state, but one was built in 1919. The others fall in age between these extremes.

A second group, made up of ninety-five plants, have electric lights but no other modern conveniences. These plants own about 8,000 houses and employ 22,000 workers.[2] Seventeen of them charge no rent. Three of the seventeen charge for lights, five cents per light per week or twenty-five cents per week for a four-roomed house, allowing a light for the porch. The other fourteen give lights free as well as rent. The seventy-eight remaining of the ninety-five plants in this group charge rents ranging from ten to thirty-five cents per room per week, the majority charging twenty-five cents. Eleven of those asking rent charge extra for lights, from three to five cents per light per week. At four mills the occupants pay

[2]These totals are given in round numbers because at five plants the number of houses had to be estimated from the number of employees and the proportion of them which were believed to live in company houses.

the town directly, though several other plants buy power from the town through one meter at wholesale rates and sell to employees at a flat rate or include light in the rent. Again, these mills range in age from one built in 1839 to one built in 1923. Information as to the date of installing lights was not secured in all cases, but where it was it appears that most mills built since 1910 have had lights from the beginning; some others installed them about that date, and others not until the boom times of the war. Several had made the installation upon changes in management and as late as 1926.

A third group of twenty-four plants have lights and are supplied with water piped to the porch or at least to the back door of each house. They own 1,539 houses and employ 4,447 workers. In all of these villages the lights are free, though in one of them the house rental is forty cents per room per week —fifteen cents higher than in the others. Rent varies from twelve and a half cents to forty cents, the usual charge being twenty-five cents. Water is free in every case save one, where a flat rate is charged.

The fourth group, which perhaps should be included in the third, is made up of fifteen villages, with electric lights, which have water piped into the houses to a sink in the kitchen at least, so that they have a simple drainage system as well. These mills include 604 houses and employ 1,950 workers. The charges for houses, water, and light are much as in the third group.

A very large group made up of ninety-seven plants have lights, water in the kitchen, and inside toilets. These mills provide 7,428 houses and employ 21,037 workers. Lights are free with the rent in all except twelve or fifteen villages, most of which pay by meter direct to the town. Water is free with rent in all except five villages, in four of which the occupants pay the town direct. Rental charges range from nothing at all (in six cases) to fifty cents a room a week (two cases). Most mills charge twenty-five cents; a few charge fifteen cents and twenty cents and about an equal number thirty-five cents and forty cents.

Finally, there are fifteen plants employing 3,787 workers and owning 1,288 houses which have lights, kitchen sinks, sewerage, and fully equipped bathrooms in every one. In all

cases except one, lights are free with rent, and in every case, water. In this group, however, rents are higher than in the others. Two mills charge twenty-five cents a room a week, two charge forty cents, six charge fifty cents, and two, sixty cents. In the two remaining cases the information is incomplete; one mill probably charges no rent at all and the other fifty cents. The two plants which charge sixty cents per room have equipped the houses with kitchen ranges so that the occupants can have hot water. One of them has found this satisfactory, the other highly unsatisfactory because of the freezing of water pipes and consequent delaying of breakfasts and demoralization of the working force on cold mornings. Most of the others whose houses are equipped with baths have an arrangement by which the occupant can buy a hot water heater at wholesale rates through the mill, and the mill will have its plumbers install it free. Many families have taken advantage of this, since the outlay is not large and it is comparatively easy to sell the heater to the next tenant in case a family moves. Most of the plants in this group were built recently: eleven since 1917 and one in 1911. The three remaining were built before the latter date but put in the modern improvements during the last decade.

Only one manager among all those interviewed mentioned having gas in the houses. Some six or seven have screened all houses; about an equal number have a standing offer by which the mill carpenters are allowed to make the screens and put them in if the occupant of the house will furnish the material. Some came to this latter plan after the screens put in by the mill had been badly abused. One superintendent upon finding such abuse took out the screen frames entirely and stacked them in a warehouse, announcing that those tenants could get them back who were willing to re-cover them with wire. A number of mills which supply running water and sewerage have had their houses piped for baths. If the tenant will buy the tub the mill will have its own plumbers make the installation. Some have taken advantage of this, but of course such a plan is not attractive to many who think they may move in a short time, for the outlay is somewhat larger than with hot water heaters, and there is still need for a heater to make the bathtub completely usable.

In the above grouping of villages each has been placed in the group in which most of its houses belong. There are, however, in almost every village some houses which belong to a higher class than the majority. It has long been the custom to furnish to the supervisory force better and larger houses with more conveniences than to the rest of the workers. For example, a village that provides only lights in all houses would probably have running water in the foremen's houses. Sometimes these improvements extend to houses for second hands as well as for foremen. Thus in a village of a hundred houses there will perhaps be five or ten with equipment superior to that of the majority. In addition, there are seven mills that have extended improvements to a portion of the houses—from one-fourth to one-half in villages which have been included in the lower group. Such cases are fairly rare. Usually when a management decides to put in lights or water or sewerage or baths in houses other than foremen's, it extends these conveniences to the entire village, unless some part of it is so hilly as to make the installation difficult and expensive. One notable exception to this is at Cramerton. This company has running water and inside toilets in all houses and is putting in baths as the people ask for them. "Some people do not want them, and we do not believe in putting them in till they are ready for them and will use them."

The writer has visited and ridden about in hundreds of villages, many besides those of the mills included in the present study. There are still many that are below a proper standard; there are others where the houses need painting and the whole village a general refurbishing, these belonging usually to mills which have been rather hard hit by the depression since 1920. On the whole, however, the houses of the mill workers compare favorably with those of the rural workers of similar economic status; they compare favorably with those of other town dwellers of similar status. Formerly most mills charged no rent for houses; there are still some that do not, as we have seen, though in the vast majority of cases rents are about $4 a month. Thus the mill worker pays from one to two days' wages per month for rent, whereas the industrial worker of the North and East commonly figures on a week's wages for a month's rent.

The standard of housing in mill villages of North Carolina is gradually rising. This improvement applies to appearance, size, comfort, and convenience. It is particularly noticeable when villages built in the last decade are compared with those built earlier. Of all the villages visited for this study, only one built during the last ten years failed to show some of the recent improvements in appearance. This mill will be described along with others later. Improvement is equally noticeable—in many cases more so—in the houses which mills have added to take care of enlargements of the plant or which have become necessary through the fact that a decreasing number of workers now come from each house. Such villages, especially if they have several additions, afford a vivid object lesson in the stages of development of mill housing.

HOUSING AS WELFARE WORK

The housing of employees in North Carolina is gradually becoming a welfare activity. Perhaps in respect to rents it has, in some cases, always been. Formerly many mills charged no rent and a few still charge none. Others have special practices of their own. Deep River Mills, for example, have long followed the custom of charging rent for the first forty-eight weeks of the year, leaving December rent free. It has been a well-nigh universal custom to charge no rent when the mill is closed down and almost as common to charge none when it is on short time. No doubt this is done partly as a means of holding the force together until the mill reopens, for if the people can continue to live in the houses free they may be able to make ends meet with part pay or will take whatever odd jobs can be picked up. The less complete the break, the surer the return when they are needed. No doubt it is done partly because the system of accounting used in the mills takes little note of the cost of housing, and even if it did the loss of the nominal rent would make little difference in the total expense, while freedom from payment does mean much to the individual worker if the family has no employment. In a few cases there were evidences of some vague recognition of the duty of the mill to provide steady work. This attitude is rather rare; in general the managements feel that a shut-down

or short time work is so completely beyond their control that the worker must take his chance in the market along with the company. Stabilization has only recently begun to be seriously thought of in connection with the work of the Cotton-Textile Institute. Stabilization of the working force has not yet been attacked scientifically, though hit-or-miss attempts to cope with the problem have been common. This matter of allowing use of the houses rent free is one.

But probably it is done chiefly with the intention of giving relief. For when the mill closes, immediately the local labor market is glutted with men willing to take any sort of job to tide them over. The chances are that neighboring mills, facing the same market condition, are closed or on part time as well, so that there is little chance of employment at one's own trade. The mill has a group of people most of whom are, from necessity, living close to the limit of their income. As soon as the job stops, relief for some is immediately needed. If relief is welfare work then the waiving of rent is, and has long been, a phase of welfare work. As for the present and the future, whatever the local situation which makes housing by the mills a necessity or a convenience, the fact is evident that in the better villages much of the expense of housing has moved over into the welfare account, since it promotes activities "for the comfort and improvement, intellectual and social, of the employees, over and above wages paid, which are not a necessity of the industry or required by law."[3] For certainly the securing and holding of employees is not altogether dependent on varied bungalows and running water and baths: there are too many mills with houses that are mediocre or worse which have little turnover; there are too many families moving from a village with modern improvements to one with rows of identical dun-colored houses and no conveniences—all this to the chagrin and disgust of the owner of the up-to-date village.

COST OF HOUSING

Whether he considers it necessary to running the mill or good business or a philanthropic measure for raising standards

[3]See p. 352.

of living, the mill manager finds any village, and especially a modern village, a considerable addition to his manufacturing cost. Prior to the last two decades, houses were simple, lumber and labor to erect them cheap, taxes low, modern conveniences rare, and the standard of upkeep probably somewhat lower than at present. Under such conditions the rent of twenty-five cents a room a week probably covered most of the cost of service, though frequently no rent was charged until some improvement such as lights or water had been put in. With all the above conditions changed, housing expense has become a large item, especially where tenements represent an actual cash investment of $450 to $500 per room, to say nothing of annual upkeep. There are probably few villages in North Carolina in which the rent does more than meet the current expense of the property, without allowing anything for interest on a fair valuation of land and houses. This practice of subsidizing mill houses is emphasized in all discussions of wages in the Southern mills as adding considerably to the real income of the workers' families. It is a point upon which more exact knowledge is needed.

For certainly not many mill managers know what it costs them to carry the houses: some items are never counted—interest often is not—and other items are so widely scattered in whatever rather casual accounts are kept that they can be assembled only with difficulty. At least a dozen mill managers, representing twice as many mills, when asked what housing cost them, said they did not know and did not want to know —"it would be so discouraging, and we have to do it anyhow!" Some others "guessed" and estimated; still others looked up a few tangible items and estimated others. There were only about a half dozen mills included in this study in which the managers have really made a careful summary of all these expenses. One summary was made by Mr. Stuart W. Cramer for the National Industrial Conference Board, covering his village at Cramerton. But his final figure of $4.36 per week per employee included several welfare activities as well as housing and hence is not very valuable for our present purposes. Besides, Cramerton, while providing no better housing than some other villages in the state, is certainly well above the average. Mr. Marshall Dilling, superintendent of

A. M. Smyre Manufacturing Company, a man who applies a real spirit of research to all his problems, from the twisting properties of his cotton to the cost of electric lights for the village, has figured rather carefully on housing. He finds that it costs about a dollar a day ($6.00 a week) per house for water, lights, interest, upkeep, and everything else, whereas he gets back $1.00 a week in rent. Therefore, the mill loses $5.00 a week or about $250 a year on each house. The rents are nearly equal to the village pay-roll: the rent totals $150 a week, while the men working constantly on the houses and about the village are paid $143 a week and use three teams besides, as well as materials for maintenance repairs. Again, however, this is a village that is much above the average for the state.

One other instance is more typical. A large group of mills has houses of various ages and types, from the simplest cottages to six-roomed shingle and stucco bungalows with baths. Most of them fall in our two middle groups, having lights only or having lights and running water but no sewerage. This company after figuring rather carefully finds that the total cost of interest and upkeep is about 11 per cent of the investment in housing. The rent makes a return of about 5 per cent, leaving 6 per cent of the total amount invested in housing to be supplied each year as a subsidy. All houses erected by this company in recent years—and it has built many during the last decade—have cost about as follows:

4-roomed house, lot, grading on yard, proportionate cost of deep well serving several houses, or of water line if piped to house, $2,000 @ 6% interest	$120.00
Insurance 1%	20.00
Taxes 1½%	30.00
Depreciation and upkeep 5%	100.00
	$270.00
Rent @ 25c a room a week	52.00
Annual subsidy per house	$218.00

The following are examples of estimates on different types of houses, made with varying degrees of accuracy:

1. A mill over fifty years old, about half its 160 houses having been built some years ago.

Value of house, $1,000 @ 6%	$60.00
Taxes 1.6%	16.00
Depreciation and upkeep 2%	20.00
Water and lights (given with rent) estimated	12.00
	$108.00
Rent	52.00
Annual subsidy per house	$56.00

Water is purchased from the town. The last month's water bill of $125 was shown the writer. Lights were secured through the mill at industrial rates from a hydro-electric company.

2. A very old mill with old houses that have been kept in excellent repair and have undergone some remodeling gave the valuation which the insurance company puts on its houses. They probably did not cost that sum originally, though additions and remodeling have probably brought the investment to the figure given. On the other hand, they could not be replaced for twice the amount. It is such situations which have made estimates so difficult.

Average value of houses $800 @ 6%	$48.00
Taxes 1.67% (of which .3 is a recent special school tax)	13.36
Insurance	1.92
Upkeep, repairs, etc. estimated at 5%[4]	40.00
Total	$103.28
Rent	52.00
Annual subsidy per house	$ 51.28

3. A mill built about forty years ago has many three-roomed houses among the fifty making up its village. The manager estimated that though many probably cost less, they represent an average investment of $600, since there are several more recently built foremen's houses which cost $1,800 and $2,000. While they have depreciated somewhat, the appreciation due

[4]This is the percentage allowed by the government on wooden buildings in estimating depreciation and upkeep for income tax returns. Usually the executive interviewed suggested this figure himself, sometimes a lower percentage and in a few cases a higher one. Whenever he was unable to estimate this cost, the writer asked if the government allowance would be satisfactory.

to increase in the cost of lumber, etc., will probably balance depreciation; one that burned last year was replaced as cheaply as possible and he thought he did well at a cost of $750.

Interest on $600 @ 6%	$ 36.00
Upkeep and depreciation 5%	30.00
Taxes and insurance	40.00
	$106.00
Rent	40.00
Annual subsidy per house	$ 66.00

This mill collects $2,000 a year in rent for the fifty houses, which very nearly pays for the taxes and insurance.

4. A mill built in 1910 has forty-two houses, very much below the average in construction and general appearance for a mill built at that time. The following estimate is probably fair unless the amount allowed for depreciation and upkeep is too high:

Average cost $800 @ 6%	$ 48.00
Insurance	5.00
Taxes	4.00
Lights (given with rent)	12.00
Depreciation and repair 5%	40.00
	$109.00
Rent	50.00
Annual subsidy per house	$ 59.00

5. A small country mill has forty-two houses built at intervals since 1901, the last seven costing $13,000 a year or two ago. The manager thought that $1,000 each was not too high an average cost. The forty-two are valued on the tax books at $23,000. The manager estimated the following amounts:

Interest on $1,000 @ 6%	$ 60.00
Depreciation and upkeep 5%	50.00
Taxes	16.00
Insurance	2.00
	$128.00
Rent	52.00
Annual subsidy per house	$ 76.00

In this case if the valuation is too high the final figure is probably not, since he added nothing for lights, which are furnished free with the rent.

6. A small mill with thirty cottages of two, three, and four rooms, simple and none too well maintained, which were built about 1910, estimates the following costs:

Average value of houses $700 @ 6%	$ 42.00
Upkeep and depreciation 5%	35.00
Insurance	5.00
Taxes	4.00
	$86.00

No rent is charged, so that all this amount becomes subsidy.

In this case the item for interest may be little too large and that for taxes too small, since the mill and village are in a small town that has been making some improvements, and taxes are rather high at present.

7. A large mill has 525 houses ranging all the way from a few ceiled three-roomed cottages built in the early eighteen-nineties to five and six-roomed bungalows built at the peak of after-the-war prices. The manager suggested an average cost of $1,200, for although the earlier, small houses cost much less than this, the last 300 cost considerably more.

Interest on $1,200 @ 6%	$ 72.00
Taxes 2.70% (in town limits)	32.40
Depreciation and upkeep 5%	60.00
Water and lights	12.00
	$176.40
Rent here will average almost $2 a week (graded according to age and type of house)	$100.00
Annual subsidy per house	$76.40

The amount for taxes here is probably too large as it is reckoned on the $1,200 valuation, which is doubtless more than the tax valuation. The company spent about $80,000 putting in a water system with sewerage, an average of about $150 per house. The town gave them no aid on this project and did not previously help the mill to dispose of the sewage

from that part of the village which could not, on account of intervening elevations, use city mains.

8. The 150 houses of another mill, averaging 3.3 room each, cost with their proportionate part of the water system $350 per room to build.

350×3=$1,050 @ 6%	$ 60.00
Upkeep	25.00
Taxes	14.00
Lights and water, about	12.00
	$111.00
Rent	39.00
Annual subsidy per house	$72.00

The water bill was a guess, but the manager had the light bill looked up and it was found to be about $65 a month for the 150 houses; he estimated that the water would round out the dollar a month since it is bought from the town, and the electric power is secured at industrial rates from the power company.

9. The manager of a medium-sized mill with fifty-two houses, the majority of which are of two stories and have five and six rooms, took considerable trouble to look up the items of housing cost, which he gave for the village as a whole:

Interest on the investment	$4,800.00
Water	1,300.00
Insurance	275.00
Lights	100.00
Taxes	400.00
	$6,875.00
Return in rent	3,200.00
Subsidy	$3,675.00

This amounted to about $70 per house for the fifty-two houses. In this case interest allows a valuation of about $80,000 for the houses, which would seem rather high, even considering the size of the houses, except for the fact that the company made a cash outlay a few years ago of $30,000 for

a water and sewerage system and a little paving. The water bill seems a rather amazing total, but the manager produced bills for enough months to make it convincing. The water is bought from the town. It averages about $2.00 a month per house.

10. Another mill has a water bill from the adjoining town of $300 a month for 212 houses. This mill was built about 1906 but has been enlarged several times, so that its houses represent several levels of building costs. The superintendent thinks that they have averaged $1,200, since many have been built during the last ten years and all at a higher price than that. In 1918 the company installed a water and sewerage system which cost $75,000, or an average of $350 per house. With this taken into consideration, his allowance of $1,200 certainly does not seem too large. Water and lights are free with rent. He says that the rents will pay these bills and meet the repair charges as well. The entire interest and taxes constitute a subsidy.

11. The manager of a medium-sized mill built in the late eighteen-nineties said that the mill has $100,000 invested in its hundred houses.

Interest at 6%	$ 60.00
Upkeep and depreciation @ 5%	50.00
Taxes 2.5%	25.00
	$135.00

Rent free—all subsidy.

This mill is in a town, which accounts for the high tax rate. The valuation for tax purposes should probably be scaled down, but since no allowance was made for cost of lights, which are free, the total is probably about correct.

12. The manager of two plants, one in a city and the other in its suburbs, went to some trouble to estimate the items of cost in more detail. One hundred and twenty of the two hundred houses were built at the peak of prices to take care of a night shift. Because of this and the fact that half of the houses are in the city where the land valuation is rather high, he thought he was justified in estimating the average cost at $1,600.

Interest on $1,600 at 6%	$ 96.00
Insurance	3.20
Taxes 2% on a valuation of $800	16.00
Lights	9.00
Paint every 4 or 5 years at a cost of $80–$100 each time—average each year	20.00
Other repairs and depreciation	40.00
	$184.20
Rent at 20¢ a room a week, including light	42.00
Subsidy	$142.20

13. Another city mill with 180 houses of about the same type and age and with similar land values has to subsidize its houses rather more highly because they have running water. The company put in the water and sewerage system with no aid from the town.

Interest on estimated cost of $1,500 per house @ 6%	$ 90.00
Taxes 2% on a valuation of $900	18.00
Water and lights—estimated	24.00
Upkeep and depreciation @ 5%	75.00
	$207.00
Rent about	50.00
Subsidy	$157.00

14. About the same amount of subsidy seems to be necessary in a country mill which has installed its own water system, deep wells, tank, and sewerage system. A good many of the 120 houses are of recent construction; with the cost of the water system allocated among them the manager considered that $1,600 was not too large an estimate for the investment.

Interest on $1,600 at 6%	$ 96.00
Depreciation and upkeep 5%	80.00
Taxes—1.76% on a valuation of $800	13.00
Lights—estimated $1 a month	12.00
Water—pumping and man to attend to it	6.00
	$207.00
Rent	52.00
Subsidy	$155.00

15. The manager of a group of three mills built from 1907 to 1921 estimates a very high subsidy, partly because of the custom of allowing one room rent free for each worker who lives in a house. Thus the rent return rarely averages over $15 a year. Another reason for the high estimate of subsidy is because of a high investment estimate. To be sure, more of the houses were built in good business years than in poor, and they are mostly pleasant bungalows, but the estimate is higher than in any other village except where all the houses were built between 1917 and 1922.

Interest on $2,000 @ 6%	$120.00
Taxes 2.27% on $1,000 valuation	22.00
Depreciation—5% on $1,000 valuation	50.00
Insurance, about	4.00
	$196.00
Rent	15.00
Subsidy	$181.00

16. A mill built in 1916 doubled its capacity several years later, so that all its houses were built during a period of rather high prices and half of them about the peak. They are varied bungalows of excellent type, with running water and sewerage, and about a fourth have baths. Many are five and six-roomed houses.

Average cost $1,500, or if the cost of water system is pro-rated, $500 additional, $2,000 @ 6%	$120.00
Taxes on a valuation of $1,200 @ 1.5%	18.00
Depreciation and repair 5%	100.00
Light and water—estimated	12.00
	$250.00
Rent 25¢ a room a week	50.00
Subsidy, about	$200.00

PROPORTION OF CAPITAL INVESTED IN HOUSES

Another phase of the housing problem which has been much commented on in the textile papers and at meetings of manufacturers is the proportion of the mill's capital which is tied

up in the village. Some writers and speakers have roughly estimated that it amounts to one-third of the total investment. As has been pointed out in the above estimates, it is impossible, judging only from the accounting system and the way much of the repair work is done at mills that have built their houses over a period of years, to say what they cost in actual money investment. It is equally difficult and probably hardly fair to calculate the cost on present replacement values, and yet it seems proper to allow something for the great appreciation in value that has gone on during the last decade. A few of the newer mills were able to give enough information about the total cost of their houses to throw some light on the proportion invested in villages.

The Rowan Cotton Mill at Salisbury has pleasant varied bungalows, fully underpinned with brick, plastered, equipped with electric lights, sinks in the kitchens, baths, and sewerage, averaging five rooms besides the bath. Those built in 1920 cost $500 a room, and those in 1924 cost $425 a room, with an average of $450 for the village as a whole. The fifty-five houses have a total of 275 rooms which, at $450 per room, amount to $123,750. This does not include the land for lots and streets and the expense of laying out the streets. Here there was not a great deal of grading necessary. Information as to the cost of the land was not secured, but it is unlikely that the total cost of the village was over $150,000. The mill is capitalized at $500,000. Thus the village investment amounts to 30 per cent.

The Cleveland Cloth Mill has a village of varied bungalows fully underpinned with brick, equipped with lights, baths, sewerage, and sinks in the kitchens, and having heavier weatherboarding than is commonly used in mill houses. The village has concrete sidewalks and young trees growing along the streets and all the lawns planted with grass. This village of forty-one houses including a brick boarding house cost, in all, $50,000 out of a total investment of $260,000, and the manager said that it cost $20,000 more than it would have cost had he made it as plain and inexpensive as possible. Thus a model village built in 1925, when prices were not at their highest but were far higher than the average for mill houses all over the state, cost 19 per cent of the total investment.

This percentage is increased somewhat if we include the twenty-seven houses recently built. They are of brick veneer construction and cost about $500 per house more than the wooden houses described above. The management considers these brick veneer houses a distinct step forward.

The Wade Manufacturing Company built 104 houses in 1924. They are varied bungalows, fully underpinned with brick, equipped with electric lights, running water, inside toilets, and shower baths. They average slightly over four rooms each. A landscape architect was employed to lay out the village. The average cost was $375 a room or approximately $160,000 out of a capitalization of $750,000, about 21 per cent.

The China Grove Cotton Mills built their seventy-three houses, averaging five rooms each, in 1923. They are well designed, varied bungalows, fully underpinned with brick, plastered, having rift-pine floors, electric lights, completely equipped bathrooms, and having plenty of closets. These houses cost over $400 a room. At this figure they totaled $146,000, not counting the expense of the land and streets. Including everything, it would hardly seem possible that the total cost of the village amounted to more than 20 per cent of the $1,000,000 capitalization.

Of course these villages cost more than the average of North Carolina villages, partly because they were built at times of higher prices but chiefly because they are better built, better equipped, and have larger houses. Even the very fact that they have houses of varied styles made their cost greater than that of villages containing rows of identical cottages. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the investment in dwelling houses does not represent the total cost of a village. As has been shown in other chapters, mills usually have some money invested in school buildings, in churches, and in buildings for stores often rented at nominal rates. And yet with all these things taken into consideration, it is doubtful whether the average mill in North Carolina has more than 20 per cent of its capital invested in its village. Here again is a proper field for careful study.

Any discussion of the relation of housing and its subsidy to wages should include two points. First, the mill can provide houses, even including the subsidy, more cheaply than the in-

dividual operatives can provide the same sort of house for themselves. This is true for several reasons: the land has been bought in a large tract for industrial purposes, more cheaply than the small building lot could be purchased. The mill erects many houses at once, getting the benefit of wholesale buying of materials and the usually superior bargaining power and experience of its executives. Maintenance is undertaken by a crew of workers who are paid regular wages and is cheaper than repairs done by contract or odd job, though of course a part of the saving in this is counterbalanced by the fact that the owner of a home does many such things himself. Lights and water are bought by the mill at wholesale or industrial rates and are much cheaper than when measured out to the individual householder. Tax valuation is based on the entire property and is at a somewhat lower rate than for single houses and owners.

Secondly, the mill can provide houses more cheaply than the operatives can rent them from private landlords. The reasons for this are largely the same as those we have given above, to which is to be added the obvious fact that the landlord must have a profit. Many of the executives interviewed stated what rentals were asked in nearby towns for houses similar to theirs. These ranged from $8.00 to $15.00 a month for the simplest houses, depending on the size of the town and its current housing situation. Houses like the usual type of mill tenement bring from $12 to $18, while those comparable to the best mill dwellings rent for $15 to $25 a month. Water and lights are of course always extra. It can be readily seen that the difference between the mill rents and these rates would more than pay the subsidy. Thus a study of housing in relation to wages should show how much the mill actually contributes to the wage in subsidy on the basis of what it costs the mill to house workers; such a study should also show how much the mill contributes potentially when we consider what it would cost the operative to house himself by owning or renting.

CHAPTER XI

MILL VILLAGE APPEARANCE AND POLICY

The summaries of various aspects of the mill village in the last chapter still leave many facts and phases unmentioned, chiefly because they are too general to be summarized and because the mills vary too much to allow them to be placed in categories. Especially do such attempts at description by classification leave out one aspect of the mill village which has interested the ordinary citizen, the newspaper or magazine writer, the mill critic, and the mill booster, namely, its general appearance. In making this study the writer attempted to describe briefly and as objectively as possible each village as soon as visited. The following extracts from these descriptions not only show the variety in appearance but throw light on many other village matters which have not been discussed, such as street maintenance, general tidiness, upkeep, and the like.

VILLAGES BUILT BEFORE 1880

The villages of most of the very old mills included in this study are surprisingly good-looking considering their age, though many of them are on rather steep land.

1. The houses in the small village of one old mill are quaint, with their irregular roofs sweeping from a cozy second story to the shed rooms at the back, and large outside chimneys give them a substantial look. The mill has recently changed hands and the new owners have refurbished the village and painted the houses, so that as a whole they give a pleasant appearance though the land on which most of them are built is too hilly to make comfortable yards.

2. Most of the houses of another village are on a hillside overlooking a meadow stretching down to the river which provides power. Most of them are story-and-a-half houses very different from any now being built. They replaced original log houses. They appear to be in good repair, the present owners

having found it necessary when they bought the mill some ten years ago practically to rebuild many of them. They are painted well enough for protection but are rather dusty and dark. There are a great many cows and chickens in this village, the latter causing squabbles among the villagers because of the many gardens.

3. One of the oldest mills in the state still uses some of its original houses near the mill. They are in a bad state of repair and need paint, a condition which, together with untidy mill premises, makes a bad impression on the visitor. This feature is partly redeemed, however, by the pleasant cottages and bungalows farther away. Most of the village is very steep.

4. Another village is strung up and down a long hill above the mill on the stream, but the houses do not have long pillars on one side as might be expected—probably because they are so old that gradually the ground on one side has been dug out and that on the other side filled in. They are well painted and clean looking, and nearly all have vines and shrubs and flowers. They are rather varied, having been built at widely separated intervals. This diversity, together with the presence of shrubs and trees, makes it an altogether livable village.

5. The log houses of this mill were replaced by frame cottages about 1888, and there have since been additions in several styles. They have all been painted white fairly recently. The land is very hilly and the streets must become impassable in winter, though they are laid out to follow the contour of the land.

6. Old-looking houses that do not appear to be in a good state of repair—paint dingy, and porch floors often rotten at the edges—make up this old village. Many of them are built end-to-end in pairs, with a single chimney serving two tenements. They are very close to the street, the steps leading directly to ill-defined sidewalks which merge vaguely with the roadway. Fat, slovenly women and girls take their ease on dirty porches. Through the open front doors still dirtier interiors are visible. Many of the houses have lush summer gardens extending up to the back doors, but the rest have yards well sprinkled with rubbish and trash. The one good feature is the rows and rows of trees, large and fine and placed thickly enough to make the streets cool colonnades and the

thin little houses pleasanter to live in. The dirt streets are good, though probably very dusty in dry weather.

7. About a third of the houses in another village date from just after the Civil War. They are quaint and attractive with outside chimneys of stone and the main body of the house a story and a half with a single story addition at one end. The others are cottages and square-topped houses. All look well kept, with the paint fresh enough and the yards rather weedy but otherwise clean and tidy. A good sand-clay road winds from the mill through the village to the nearby town.

VILLAGES BUILT 1880–1900

8. One company has turned over to a branch plant its old mill, with its well shaded, grass-covered lawn and its village of tiny two and three-roomed dingy cottages scattered higgledy-piggledy over a gently sloping hillside. The new mill has a model village of light-colored bungalows varied in style, color, and location on the lots, some with shade, others with sunlight and flowers and vegetable gardens. The long winding road up which they are built is well laid out, but it is kept in a condition disgraceful to the town within the limits of which the village is located. The raw, red clay was at some wet season, presumably in winter, badly rutted by heavy trucks and has never been smoothed, so that it is well-nigh impassable in dry weather and must be quite so in wet.

9. A seedy village with the paint nearly worn off the flimsy houses. Steep streets, washed and rutty, with a few cinders dumped on in such a way as to make the improvement something of a trial in itself. The houses are so placed, however, that they do not have long pillars, though many of the gardens at the back are very steep.

10. A village of rather dingy though substantial houses. Nearly every one has a garden and a fenced-in yard with shrubs and flowers and fairly neat outhouses for cars and cows, so that they have an air of being "lived in." The dirt streets are well graded and laid out following the contour of the hills.

11. Another village is made up largely of two-story houses which, though monotonous, look roomy and substantial and

are well kept. Neatly clipped hedges border all yards on the main street leading down to the mill, where flower beds and grass and service areas are as tidy as care can make them. There are plenty of trees, and most houses have shrubs and vines.

12. A small village of neat, freshly painted, well repaired cottages overlooking a delightful lake made by the damming of the stream for power, overlooking also the mill yard cluttered with piles of supplies and rubbish.

13. The houses near the mill in this village have small yards full of little shacks and trash and tin cans. In the newer parts the yards are as orderly as any seen in the state. Care was taken to vary the houses in plan and detail but most of the effect has been lost by painting them all in one color and trimming them all in another. A concrete county road serves a large part of the village, and there are good, graded sand-clay streets in the other parts.

14. The houses of this village, scattered up the gentle hillside rising from the mill, all vary in the length of their pillars on opposite sides, but plenty of flowers in the front yards serve to counteract this awkwardness somewhat. The vines and shrubs at almost every house have no doubt accumulated over the village's many years of existence. These plants, a fair sprinkling of trees, moderately fresh white paint, running water and sewerage, and excellent summer gardens make it comparable to far newer villages in comfort and appearance. The houses at the upper end of the village, which are owned by the occupants, are of about the same size or a little larger and are more varied in color and style but on the whole represent about the same standard of living. They do not have electric lights or water.

15. The builders of another village very wisely put it on the top of the hill rather than on the slope leading to the mill and the river. The old-fashioned houses with their broken roof lines and fresh white paint are surrounded by fine old trees and many by grass lawns, though some have yards in which red clay and tree roots are evident. The president is "a great one for his flowers and always has beds about the mill." The influence in the village is evident.

16. A village made up of plain cottages, many of them

perched on the side of the hill and very "leggy." They are freshly enough painted, however, and the premises are fairly well kept. The road through the main part of the village is hard-surfaced; the side roads are of clay, rather steep and probably bad in winter. Spaces by the side of the roads and everywhere except very near the houses are very weedy, which must make the whole village rather dreary after frost, but not unattractive when things are green—at any rate it is better than the red clay banks that would show if the weeds were not there!

17. Another water power mill has built its village on the top of the hill, where the land is level and the soil excellent. It has a reputation over the entire community for its good vegetable gardens, and there are many flowers as well. The streets are well graded, with concrete curbs and gutters.

18. A dull little village merging with a large town, dull mainly because its houses are painted dark reds and greens and browns. Although within the town limits, only one street is paved, and the houses do not have water or sewerage. The houses seem unusually small. All have garden plots, most of them well tended; the mill encourages them by giving seeds.

19. Another village inside town limits is fully supplied with sidewalks laid by the town. The dirt streets are apparently kept in good condition. The cottage-style houses have rather faded and peeling paint on the outside and ceiled, unpainted, dingy walls inside. There are few trees, though a number of yards are planted with flowers, and most of them have cultivated garden plots and orderly premises. The village is hardly up to the average in appearance, but with its sidewalks, water, and sewerage it is probably at least average in comfort.

20. There are but two rows of houses in this hilly village, which seems particularly depressing. A street with rather poor cottages all exactly alike and closer together than usual runs straight over the top of a bare, round hill, so that the houses stand out against the sky with a world of empty space around them.

21. About half of this village is made up of cottages painted a dull yellow-brown, all alike in shape and in color. The paint is fresh enough—as fresh as this color ever looks, no doubt. But the houses are ranged in not too precise rows, with plenty

of fine trees and garden spaces of good soil, and at least half the yards and porches are full of flowers. All in all, it seems more livable than the other half of the village, treeless and bare, made up of new bungalows, with the white paint peeling off and showing the knotty, grubby lumber of which they are built, and with the open doors revealing the unpainted ceiled interiors.

22. A mill, well inside town limits and near the center, has well graded and maintained streets, but no sidewalks—merely gully-washed spaces where the sidewalks should be. The village is almost hidden under a grove of splendid oaks—in fact, there is so much shade that flowers and gardens are impossible, and the houses, painted in light colors, are so stained by drippings from the trees that they do not make as good an appearance as their comparatively fresh paint entitles them to. In the back yards there are a great many clumsy garages built of slabs.

23. A large village, making up part of a good-sized town, has every mark of deadly monotony—straight streets, level land, houses plain and almost all alike. And yet, because of considerable variety in the kinds of trees and in the treatment of yards—some being full of flowers, some fenced—and because of the larger size and varied colors of the houses, somehow the whole looks more like an non-industrial town than one would expect. Most of the yards are as neat and clean as the average but there are a few much below. There are many little sheds and outhouses, and most dwellings have gardens. Though the garden plots are small the mill provides additional space beyond the village. The houses have no curtain walls between the brick pillars, but as the pillars are not high and the land is level this does not detract so much as usual. The streets are well graded and rounded for drainage. Sidewalks are well sanded or graveled.

24. The monotony of this large village is unbroken by trees, a rather remarkable fact since part of it is at least thirty years old. The houses in the older section are set off by vines and shrubs, but the newer parts have nothing to break the straight, level streets, with straight lines of houses. The latter vary from the old type of cottage to up-to-date bungalows, all well maintained. Back yards are more tidy than one usu-

ally sees. All houses have water and sewerage. With the addition of a few trees the village would compare well with any in the state except the most recently built.

25. Two villages of the same company are made up of barn-like cottages and two-story houses all painted a drab gray, fresh in one, dingy in the other, but in each making an unattractive, dull village. One of them is very steep and the houses very "leggy," those facing the mill having green lattice work between the back pillars. The lots are steep but contain large gardens which are well cultivated, though most are planted only in corn. The streets are very steep but are well worked and cindered, so that they evidently do not become impassable in bad weather. Not even the little side streets are neglected, as is often the case.

26. The company houses of a large mill merge with private dwellings to make up a considerable mill town. Both kinds look much alike—varied, moderately well maintained, surrounded by some trees and shrubs and flowers. Concrete sidewalks are found everywhere. At the end of one street is a double row of depressing little two-roomed houses, painted a dull gray, dingy and dirty. The yards here are full of trash and rubbish and the streets crowded with dirty children whose appearance matches that of the houses and the sorry-looking adults.

27. A tiny village consists of a double row of houses facing one another along a narrow street or road running on the top of a ridge above the mill. They are poor little houses, dingy from lack of recent paint, and were dull in color even when the paint was fresh. The walls of the porches are dirty, and at first one supposes that the people must be very dirty as well. But then one notices that the yards, though weedy, are clean, with no tin cans or trash to be seen. Even the little black spots where the wash pots are heated are tidy and brushed up. The street or roadway serves almost for front yards and is well swept before each house, whereas in many villages of this type it is the general receptacle for small trash and sweepings. The little gardens show care and are flourishing. There are no trees. Altogether as pitiful a village as there is to be seen in the entire state, but the people are bravely making the best of what they have.

28. Like the large town mentioned as Number 23, above, this smaller village has every element of deadly monotony. Made up of small, identical, rather ungraceful, flat-topped cottages, all painted yellow, with no curtain walls between the brick pillars, and ranged in two exact rows along the streets, it might seem to be a very drab place. But the paint is of a good, cheerful color, and it is fresh and clean; the streets are wide, with a double avenue of lombardy poplars on the sides and down the middle a broad band of grass surrounded by hedges of fairly well clipped privet. And seldom among all the hundreds of villages visited did the writer see a cleaner and tidier one: at not a house in the village was there any trash or rubbish to be seen; not a house but had a front yard that looked freshly swept; scarcely a house but had a flourishing garden at the back. This is the product, not of rules and inspections—though the village has these—but of co-operation between the mill and the tenants.

29. One of the hilliest villages in the state. In many places the roadway is several feet below the bottom of the pillars of the houses on the upper side and several feet above the roofs of the house on the lower side. The roads, however, are well planned, so that driving over the town is easy; there are no steep grades, but a close approach to many of the houses must be impossible. The houses are old-style cottages and two-story tenements, which would be rather monotonous except that one can see only a few at once. They are painted freshly enough for protection, though the dust from the dirt streets causes the houses to become dingier between paintings than they should. Many are raised on long stilt-like pillars. There are trees all over the village, and the steep sides of the roads are covered with grass—not well trimmed, to be sure, but far better than the red clay banks and washed gulleys that would be visible if the grass were not there.

30. A village, built over thirty years ago, was recently remodeled. Evidently considerable care and thought—and taste—were exercised in the process, for the houses are now pleasant and varied. With fresh white paint, young maple trees, concrete sidewalks, and paved streets, this is now one of the most attractive villages to be found.

31. The houses of this mill are a great contrast to those

of the last. Built about the same time, they have had only an occasional painting and that with dull-colored paint. The whole appearance is rather desolate, and the writer tried to analyze it to see just why it was. The houses are a dingy green, but as freshly painted as those of many other villages that look far better. The yards are not cluttered up with more—perhaps with less—shacks and garages and chicken coops than many others have. Nor are there any more tin cans and rubbish scattered about over the lots than in many villages. It may be the dark color of the houses; it may be their undesirable location—straggling along the edge of a little creek behind the mill; it may be the style of the houses—mostly two-storied with clumsy, ungraceful lean-to's and of flimsy construction; it may be that the writer has so long known the mill's reputation for poor wages, poor workers, poor living and working conditions, and the general toughness of its villagers, that an impartial appraisal of even the appearance of the village is impossible.

32. Seven mills located in cities or close to the heart of good-sized towns can best be described compositely. In the main their characteristics are the same. The houses are often dingy from train smoke; some have gardens, but often they have rather small lots, few trees and flowers, and are fronted by dirt streets. Only one village in this group was above the average in appearance. It must be added, however, that careful observation of other houses in the neighborhood showed a very similar appearance. The chief difference lay in the fact that the lots of the mill houses were somewhat larger and the paint, while usually as dingy from smoke or dust, had been somewhat more recently put on for protective purposes.

VILLAGES BUILT 1900–1917

For the sake of brevity only a few villages of this group will be described in as much detail as has been used before. First will be described two of the worst that were built during the period, then one or two of medium quality, and then one of the best. Afterwards brief mention will be made of several others of the period which have certain individual characteristics.

33. Two adjoining villages are rather sad affairs. The

houses are cottages apparently in a fairly good state of repair and freshness of paint, but they are set on a bare hillside with red clay gullies and ridges making up most of the area around the houses. The latter are placed in rows in spite of the irregularity of the land. The streets consist of narrow ridges, which were once rounded roadways but which have now washed unevenly down to deep, ravine-like ditches on either side. There is no pretense at sidewalks, and in wet weather the clay must be wholly impassable for vehicles and well-nigh so for pedestrians. Most of the space between the backs of the houses is obviously just so much vacant land, though a few families are making a brave effort to cultivate the most level and least eroded parts of their alloted space. There are rows of little red privies, and the few shacks for chickens, cows, and Fords are clumsily made from sawmill slabs with the bark half on. There are no trees and few houses with shrubs and flowers. This is the kind of village that lays the industry open to the worst criticisms that can be made. In all the villages visited, the writer saw only one other as bad.

34. Although these numerous descriptions have demonstrated the fact that there is great variety in the appearance of mill villages in the state, there is, probably, a "typical" cotton mill village in the minds of most people. If so, a certain village of some two hundred houses would no doubt meet the presumed requirements better than any other here described. The houses are mostly square with slight bungalow modifications; they are all painted white freshly enough for protection, but some are rather dingy and dirty. They are lined up quite regularly along the straight, level streets, although a few are so located in the middle of the blocks that their front porches face directly toward other back doors. The main streets have curbs and gutters and are well kept; the connecting streets are neglected. Rows of fine young trees, evidently set out when the village was built, partly relieve what would otherwise be a most monotonous village. Running water and sewerage are the only unusual facilities.

35. Considerably better in appearance though probably no more comfortable for the operatives is a large village built on a moderately steep, long hillside. One row of cheap new houses on the opposite hill detracts from an otherwise pleasant town.

The streets are well laid out, some paved, some graveled, all drained, graded, and worked. One seldom sees so much rock retaining-wall in any town: every house on a sloping lot has at least a small level front yard supported by rock work. There is much terracing between houses on the slope. Trees of all sizes are scattered over the town, ranging from large oaks of original growth to little maples recently set out. There are many flowers and vines in plenty. The houses, widely varied in size and style, are painted with enough distinctiveness and freshness to be quite presentable. The village needs only a few imposing residences of local magnates to make it look like a progressive small town of any sort.

36. Except for some of the small very modern villages built since the war another large village is in many ways one of the best in the state. About half of it, the older part, is a model garden city, another section is somewhat less finished in looks, while several streets of new houses are raw and monotonous. Nearly all the houses are bungalows varied in size, design, and color, underpinned, some with brick and some with green lattice work, in the place of a curtain wall, and kept in excellent repair. About half the village has concrete sidewalks and a concrete path leading up to each house. Some of the main streets are hard-surfaced, the others sand-clayed or graveled, though a few of the newer ones are composed of deep-rutted clay that must become very bad in winter. Where terracing has been necessary the company has turfed the bank and keeps the grass mowed. It has planted and now mows the lawns of houses on the main streets and has planted the yards with dwarf shrubs attractively grouped about the foundations of the houses. The yards on less prominent streets are not so carefully planned and tended, but even here the influence of the others is evident, for most yards have grass, and though it is somewhat scrappy and patchy, it is at least kept mowed. The newer section does not as yet boast of much in the way of lawns and yards. There are enough large semi-public buildings —office, churches, school, business block, and station—all well planted and maintained, to form a town center far surpassing in appearance that of towns many times the size.

And now a few others very briefly:

37. Barn-like, two-story houses though quite roomy looking.

Covered with dust from a much-traveled dirt county road. Steep at the back, but with many fine gardens. A grove of handsome oaks serves as a park and is equipped with playground apparatus.

38. Average houses. Rather hilly and the streets rough. Not a clean or tidy village—much rubbish and many little shacks in the yards. Natural growth of trees left for shade.

39. The village of a steam power mill built, for some strange reason, on the hilliest land for miles around. Houses on stilts but plenty of fine gardens. Fresh white paint, vines and shrubs, and a surprising number of fruit trees. Steep, cindered streets.

40. The lots in this village are very large, and in some parts of it brown shingle bungalows have been built between the cottages, giving some variety to the village. Very tidy and orderly as to yards and premises. The streets are very wide, and the main streets well maintained; the little-used back and connecting streets are rutty and so grown up with weeds that they look like meandering trails. None is bad, however, since the land is level and somewhat sandy. Rows of handsome trees on the main street. Sidewalks of sand and gravel. Running water, sewerage, and baths.

41. Very plain cottages, rather smaller than the average, built in straight rows. Paint very dingy, but the superintendent said he was just beginning to repaint at the time of the visit. Average trees and gardens. Few flowers, some houses with untidy yards, and one or two of the side streets littered with much small rubbish and trash as though it had been swept out of the yards.

42. A large village on hilly land. Many old-style cottages including more with three rooms than usual. The newer part of the village is made up of bungalows. The whole village has been freshly painted. The manager said that keeping the very steep streets in good condition is a great problem. They were very good at the time of the visit. Yards steep but nearly every house has a little garden spot in cultivation.

VILLAGES BUILT SINCE 1917

43. One of the most unattractive villages of such recent date in North Carolina. Most of the houses are located along a

straggling, washed clay street leading away from the mill on a long ridge. Hence there is a low step or two up to the front porch and long pillars in the back, except for a section of the village across the ravine, where the situation is reversed. No attempt at grading has been made, though better planning would have made it almost unnecessary. Mostly of three and partly of four rooms, the plain, flattish-topped cottages appear to be of flimsy, cheap construction. All are alike, since the length of the wing containing the fourth room makes little difference in appearance. They are painted differently, and freshly enough, but in such dark colors as to add to the dullness of the village. No suggestion of sidewalks. No trees, few flowers, and a few poor gardens. Many of the houses have rubbish around the yards, and many show dirty weatherboarding on the porches and under the kitchen windows where dishwater is evidently thrown out carelessly. The dull red mass of the mill at the head of the street dominates and caps off in appropriate fashion the dismal little village. At a time when almost every new mill in the state was building pleasant, varied, modern houses this one was building a village that cannot compare favorably with the oldest and worst, for most of the old villages are well kept and livable looking, and the worst of them belong to mills that often built well but have been hard hit by the long depression of the market for an old-style product.

44. Roomy, new-style bungalows, all painted white, but the paint rather faded and peeled off and very dingy because of much-traveled county roads through the village. Little trees just set out and few flowers. Below the average in appearance, but probably not in comfort on account of the size of the houses and the presence of running water and sewerage.

45. Brown shingled bungalows underpinned with brick, all alike over the large village. Near the mill, where they are older and where the better-class workers live, the yards are well planted, and this section looks like the residential area of any modest suburb. The streets have concrete curbs and gutters, concrete sidewalks with a walk leading to each house, and well graded and cindered or graveled roadways. The farther one goes from the mill, the less attractive the yards and premises become and the fewer flowers are seen, until on the last row—

though it is the most recently built—the yards are untidy, the porches dirty, the brown shingles near the floor of the porch stained and discolored by careless splashing of the lye scrubbing water, the edges of the brick work abutment and concrete trimming of the steps broken and cracked. There is hardly a garden in the whole town, and the back views of most rows are unattractive, monotonous lots covered with weeds. Few trees. Baths and sewerage installed.

46. A village of pleasant, modern bungalows underpinned with brick. All trees have been cut down to make room for the village and the stumps still stand about. This rawness detracts from the appearance of what is really a very good village.

47. A good-sized village of bungalows varied in design and placing, though all are painted white. Some more "leggy" than the average of this type; some lattice work between the brick pillars. The people have done wonders with a rather raw setting by planting a profusion of summer flowers—nearly every yard was a riot of color.

48. A pleasant village of bungalows averaging five rooms, with a good number of six rooms and some of four rooms so that there is considerable variety in size. No two in sight of each other are alike or painted alike. Light paint and quite fresh. Baths and sewerage. Gently curving streets follow the easy roll of the land, so that with growth of the young trees, transplanted when the village was built a year or so ago, the whole prospect will be most attractive. Very clean premises, and the appearance of the weatherboarding on the porches and by the back windows bore out the manager's claim that the operatives appreciate good houses and keep them clean.

49. A small village built on a curving concrete road laid by the company. Delightful bungalows, larger than most that were seen. Great variety: some white, some in colors, some brown shingled, some of brick, some trimmed with brick. The writer looked with the greatest care and could see no two alike. Baths and sewerage; underpining; concrete walks. The young maples along the streets are surprisingly large in view of the age of the village. Many houses have vines and shrubs planted to screen the foundations, many have grassy lawns, and nearly every yard has bright flowers—undoubtedly due to the influ-

ence of the well-planted mill yard and the old-fashioned flower garden at the manager's house. It is quite evident that he encourages flowers by giving the operatives seeds and plants from his garden, for many of the rather unusual varieties are common in the village. Tidy back yards; clean fresh paint well kept by the mill and the occupants.

HOUSING EXPERIENCE AND POLICY

Much of this discussion of the problems of housing by the mills has constituted an indirect commentary on the operatives as well as on the management. Especially do the descriptions of the village contain many side lights upon their life, standards, and relation to the mill. There are several other phases of the housing question deserving mention, which will also show the attitudes of both parties, though our chief interest and emphasis here is upon the experience and consequent policy of the managements.

It must be said in the beginning that there is the greatest variety in the attitudes of mill executives toward housing and its related problems. This difference of opinion extends to matters of every grade of importance, from details of house construction to the advisability of housing employees at all.

For example, there is no unanimity as to whether plastered or ceiled houses are better. Some prefer the plaster finish as being warmer, but they find it is more expensive to maintain and needs frequent repair because of careless treatment and abuse. Several oppose it because they think it makes a less sanitary house, whereas ceiled walls can be painted and freshened and made clean with little expense. And yet there are two or three who believe that plaster is cleaner and cheaper to maintain—"you can put on a coat of kalsomine for half what a coat of paint would cost." And many have changed their minds about it several times, and consequently houses of their villages built at different times are finished differently. As a result there is such a mixture in most villages, and certainly among the various mills, that it seemed hardly worth while for such a general study as this to find out which predominates.

As for water systems, a few managers have found it necessary to move spigots from the kitchen or the porch to the

ground beside the back steps because the tenants leave the water running or dripping and rot the floors. A few put them at the steps in order to install frost-proof equipment, because the people would not cut off the water on cold nights. Some of the executives whose villages have inside toilets and even baths find that there is much difficulty from freezing and that repairs on plumbing are an expensive and troublesome business in winter. One mill removed shower-bath fixtures for this reason. On the other hand, many superintendents said that they consider the tenants reasonable in their care of houses and equipment, some even going so far as to declare they are careful and coöperative. One set of opinions and their opposites are rather significant. A number of executives declared that the workers do not appreciate good houses with plumbing and baths; in every case they were those in whose villages such improvements had not been made. Managers of plants with modern houses expressed their conviction that the operatives do appreciate such houses and that even if an occasional family abuses a house, modern improvements are as a whole an education in raising the standard of living. There was only one exception to this latter sentiment. In villages where the minimum of improvements has been made one heard stories of families in "those fancy new villages" who pile coal and potatoes in the bathtubs, and even of some who made hens' nests or scalded a hog or pickled their pork in them. The writer took great care to inquire, in all villages which had baths, whether the executives were aware of such practices. Two men said they had known of pork being packed in bathtubs, but one added that it was so exceptional that everybody in the village had talked of it, and for all he knew this might have been the case of which the writer had heard elsewhere. Two said that a few families had kept their coal or potatoes in the tubs, "but after all most of the people had never been used to tubs before coming to this village, and it will necessarily take them some time to appreciate them." The thing that is surprising to the managers is that almost all families do appreciate improvements so much. One executive of a mill having a delightful village of modern houses was quite vigorous in his denouncement of people who spread such reports about the mill families. "They are saying that because they don't want to provide

such improvements, and this is an excuse. Certainly they know nothing about it, for they never have given their tenants a chance to show how they would treat good houses." And after all, though several executives of mills where good housing exists have had difficulties over details, they are still thoroughly convinced that the building of good houses is not only an advantage to the mill but a duty to the employees. Certainly such houses are a source of pride to the mill management.

In the matter of lighting, the division of opinion is not so simple. As has been pointed out in the section on equipment, most mills give lighting free with the rent, or if they charge at all have a flat rate of five cents per light per week. Under such an arrangement the tenant uses as much current as he likes for strong lamps and electric irons, though the management often tries to protect itself against waste and excessive use by insisting that tenants shall not use lamps of over a certain watt power and, in many cases, by turning off the current over the village during the day. The former rule cannot be completely enforced, for though the company store or the office may sell only bulbs of the specified power the tenants procure stronger ones elsewhere, and general house inspections are rarely careful enough to detect any but the more flagrant cases where several large lamps are used. The second rule is by no means universal—the writer when driving through villages has seen porch lights turned on in the daytime. One mill manager mentioned the fact that they kept the current on so that the workers on the night shift could run their electric fans in order to sleep better during the hot summer days, and that "anyhow if we turned it off there would be somebody right at the office wanting it turned on so that she could iron." Some mills turn off the electricity after 10:30 or 11:00 or 12:00 o'clock at night to prevent waste, since many families allow some, or even all, lights to burn as long as the power is on, even though it be all night. Especially is this noticeable as regards porch lights. A casual visitor to almost any mill village at night will hardly fail to observe that house after house down every street will have the porch light, and often one or two others, turned on at any hour of the night. Of course there is a great deal of truth in the statement of one mill manager that lights are burned because the street lights are so small,

have no reflectors, and are too far apart or are broken—for the boys love to throw stones at them if they are not encased in wire protectors. Hence the porch lights are really necessary for pedestrians along the street. This manager has faced the problem by providing street lights like those of any other town —regular 200-watt bulbs with reflectors, placed not too far apart; and with the streets adequately lighted, the porch lights are not burned. Two or three others mentioned such equipment with some pride, and at least one admitted that poor street lighting is the cause of so much waste of current on porches in his village and believed the same to be true in many others. Several thoughtful men commented on the waste of lights, saying that the tenants allow them to burn all night and all day with no realization of the fact that it is costing anything—"think it is as free as air." This encourages them in wasteful habits. The companies which make their own hydro-electric power rarely trouble about the matter, since it costs them so little and since the mills are seldom using much of the power at night. Some that buy electricity from the large hydro-electric companies and especially those that buy from towns have been more vigorous in their action. Some began charging rent or raised it when they installed electric lights; some put in meters and then often arranged with the town to let the villagers have power at a lower rate than the regular town scale. One or two allow a certain number of kilowatt hours free with the rent or at a nominal rate and charge the cost of the service for any excess.

The experience of four managers in their nine villages may be of interest in illustrating some of the problems concretely. Two of these mills under one management buy current and water from the adjacent town. The houses are equipped with lights, inside toilets, and spigots on the porch. The mills have a single meter for lights and water and pay a wholesale rate. The manager had the water bill for the preceding month looked up for the interviewer. It was $125 for the 160 houses of the two villages; and lights would probably have been more. The mill allows both free with the rent of twenty-five cents a room a week. He was asked why one or both had not been put on individual meters and the tenants required to pay the town direct in order to save expense to the mill, and why the water

and light department of the town had not insisted on this being done in order to get more revenue than the wholesale rates brought. He said that the town did prefer that method, and the mill had considered it carefully. But the meters would have been expensive; the service would have cost the employees more than the company now paid for it. "Besides, if a family should get sick, or for some reason like dull times get behind with the payments, the town would cut them off. Then the mill would have to be coming in and paying the bill to get the house reconnected, and it would be just trouble all the way round."

Another said, "We used not to charge for lights, but the people burned them night and day—too trifling to turn them out—and so we put on meters. Now we have a dark village at night instead of one with almost every window alight." He did not keep a detailed record of the decrease in the use of current which accompanied the change but estimates from general records that it was 75 per cent. A third manager uses meters, selling the first 20 kilowatt hours at a very low rate, "and after that we stick it to them. We have found that that is enough a month for the average family if they do not waste it." Not many go over the minimum, and fifty cents a month is what the average family pays for lights. When the meters were first put in, some families ran up bills of $6.00 and $7.00 a month by burning 200-watt lights and letting them stay on all night. A fourth superintendent who had been including lights in the rental of twenty-five cents a room a week decided that the tenants were too extravagant, burning high power lamps and leaving them on all night. He began putting the meters in gradually, some ten or twelve a month, and as fast as he put them in the tenants would buy small bulbs, so that each house used less current from the start than it had been using before. One worker had had three 200-watt lamps which he said he had picked up at the mill after some changes in machinery caused some of the big lamps to be jarred and discarded; he tapped them and "fooled with them till he got them to burn—a thing that can be done," added the superintendent. To burn one such lamp costs six cents an hour, or almost as much for one whole night as the rent for a week amounted to. Another villager found that he was using forty-

two and a half cents' worth of current a day, even with the smaller lamps he put in as soon as the meter was installed. This family finally got their light bill down to $3.00 a month. The rates were set at the amount which the mill pays the power company at wholesale industrial rates—six cents a kilowatt hour—and on this basis one dollar's worth a month is allowed free with the rent. Some had large bills at first. The writer saw the books with many accounts that ran up to $6.00 and $7.00, but they gradually decreased until most families have reduced their current to somewhere near the maximum allowed with the rent. Apparently the mill was able to make this change with little hard feeling on the part of the employees. Perhaps this was because the superintendent was not very strict until the tenants had time to adjust themselves to less free use of current, and even now, after two or three years of the new rules, he does not enforce them very closely in cases of sickness or in very large families. He said that he regrets not having quietly put the whole village on a single meter for a while before installing individual meters, so that he could know just how much he has saved. He can, however, estimate it with some accuracy from the total bills for power, since he knows how much to allow for increases and decreases, in use of machinery in the mill. Allowing for all this he is reasonably sure—and he happens to be a man who keeps more careful accounts than most mill managers—that the light bill for the village of some 160 houses has been cut by $300 a month.

There are many other details of the administration of the villages, around which problems center and about which differences of attitude and policy have grown up because of the diverse experiences of leading executives in carrying out their hobbies and interests. Some of these details have been mentioned in connection with health measures, but they also belong here: water supply and the wasting of water in keeping milk cool or washing automobiles; rubbish and garbage collection; house inspection systems; rules and prizes to secure order and tidiness, and their relative value; street maintenance and drainage; the keeping of cows and pigs near the village and the consequent building of nondescript shacks and outhouses; sanitation and the cleaning of privies; painting the outside of houses for protection of the property or painting the inside

for appearance, comfort, and sanitation; the moving of families from house to house within the same village. Such are some of the problems around which housing policies center, and they are activities upon which the student needs much more information before the full story of the social significance of the mill housing schemes can be told. In addition, there are two more problems which are of major importance in relation to this social significance, namely, determination of the number of workers per house and the more nearly fundamental question of whether it is wise to provide company houses for employees at all.

POLICY AS TO NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES PER HOUSE

With the first of these the present study can deal in only the most general terms. Its material was gathered in a manner ill suited to reveal both employers' and employees' attitude on this question. In the earlier part of the chapter the number of workers per house was estimated for many villages; some executives knew with accuracy how many they were getting. There seems to be little doubt that forty or even twenty years ago most managers considered that they ought to get one worker per room. In that day of large families, child labor, poor school laws and attendance, low wages, and low standards of living, they seem not only to have set this as a standard to be reached for the village as a whole but actually to have endeavored to apply it to individual houses. Now the feeling is rather that they should get from three-eighths to two-thirds of a worker per room (from one and a half in a four-roomed house to four in a six-roomed house) as an average for the village at large. If a worker is valuable, if times are dull, if there are plenty of houses, or if workers are scarce—for any one of a number of reasons, the policy is altered, and each case is settled more or less on its own merits. This is a matter upon which even opinions cannot be tabulated and classified, but the impression of the writer from many interviews and from personal knowledge of mill housing is that these estimates are merely counts of the number of workers certain mills do get and not standards set up to be applied in hiring or retaining any one family or any group of a dozen families or more. That pressure is exerted in some cases there can be

little doubt, for as a matter of business the manager or superintendent must secure as many workers per house as possible in order that the overhead expense of housing can be spread over more product. It is exactly the same as his factory production problem. Even more plainly is it a problem in manning his machines from the available houses. If he can secure enough workers to do that, who house themselves, he will not concern himself with how few he is getting from the mill houses. The manager of a small mill who took the trouble to go over his pay-roll and determine how each worker was housed was a little chagrined to find that whereas he was getting only sixty-four workers from the thirty-seven mill houses, he got twenty-nine workers from thirteen houses which workers rented from private owners and twenty-one workers from eleven houses owned by the workers themselves.

This question of the number of workers per house also involves the matter of pressure upon a worker to continue in the service of the mill when he has opportunities or a desire to work elsewhere. From the mill's viewpoint it is only fair to remember that when it makes a financial investment for housing in such amounts as we have seen, it is doing so for the same purpose for which it buys a new spinning frame or installs a new boiler—to produce more yarn or to generate more power. From the employee's viewpoint we must remember that he is an individual with ambitions and abilities, which should be developed as best suits his individual case. He should not be offered a temporary premium in the form of cheap housing or convenience to the family to keep him in work ill suited to him. From society's point of view we must ask just how much effect such pressure has, or can have, on the developing of a caste or a class and the consequence of such a trend. And, again, whether using or not using pressure the policy of the mill is determined by many factors: how valuable the worker who wishes to withdraw and how valuable the remaining worker; the type of family which is concerned; the labor and housing situations; and very often purely personal matters such as an understanding on the part of the manager of the ambitions of a given worker and the enlistment of the manager's interest in seeing him realize it. A number of executives interviewed mentioned the fact—for most mills are on the defensive in this

matter—that they personally urge young workers to remain in school or raise no objection to members of an operative's family working elsewhere. On the contrary, some mentioned just as frankly the fact that they give notice to a family that no longer furnishes a worker, or furnishes only a poorer one, to vacate its house. One or two related painful experiences in securing possession of houses through legal procedure. This, however, is rare. The mill worker is not a fool: he knows that the mill is providing him a house at a rental far less than the service is costing—he has paid rent at some time or has a friend who owns his home, and he has found that fact out quite intimately—and he knows that the house goes with the job. It is only occasionally that he contests the reasonableness of the mill's attitude and the force of tradition. On the other hand, his first question upon being employed, and usually before the matter is clinched, refers to the fact that he must have a house.

SHOULD MILLS HOUSE WORKERS?

The second question, whether the mills should house workers at all, reaches the heart of the mill village question. Again the writer is at a disadvantage in trying to summarize an unmeasurable body of opinion, but she believes that she is not making an unfair classification of the executives interviewed in assigning them to the following groups. The majority of mill managers and superintendents are thoroughly convinced that mill housing and control is necessary and best for all concerned. Many remarked on the advantages of being able to get rid of a family which is undesirable from a community and social point of view as well as from the point of view of mill work. A few with whom this question was discussed added a rather significant fact from their experience—that the villagers themselves are among the first to protest against any undesirable person and ask for his removal. One of the first series of acts of the village aldermen at Kendall Mills was to clean up the village by asking the mill to eliminate the bootleggers and gamblers and the families with undesirable women. A great many executives said that they were "strict with the girls." Some executives say that if a girl gets a bad reputation they have a talk with her parents and warn them

that they must exercise better control or move; some quietly get rid of the family—but the people all know why the action is taken. Most executives were frank enough to admit that they are not equally strict with the boys and men, and a few added that they ought to be, but that may have been because they were talking to a woman! The men of this group are certain that mill ownership and control insures better houses and standards of sanitation and cleanliness. The general appearance and equipment of the little fringe of operative-owned homes about most mill villages would certainly bear them out on this count. A more or less casual observation of the premises leaves an impression of a somewhat lower standard of tidiness here, though this may be because such a family accumulates more odds and ends during its long residence, and because the mill seldom extends to them the aid in cleaning up. Many executives were asked whether they would prefer to operate a mill in the country, or far enough out in the suburbs to insure mill control, or in a town. Most seemed to prefer the mill control, and of course that must of necessity center around mill housing. For though there are a few who prefer to be in town limits and draw their workers from the community at large, the majority seemed to take tradition and the *status quo* as right and proper, with no questions or qualms except as to details.

In the second place, there is a steadily growing group who think that the village and housing system is better for the employees but find it expensive and troublesome for the mill. The pride in improved housing conditions, the competition between mills on this point, and the as yet inarticulate demand on the part of the workers for better houses, expressed only feebly by labor turnover, is adding members to this group as rapidly as it is adding cost to the practice. As has been stated, some resolutely refuse to count up the cost "because it would be too discouraging, and we have to do it anyhow."

Thirdly, there are a few who think that the village system may be convenient for the mill but have some doubt as to its necessity or social healthfulness for the villagers. One manager expressed himself very vigorously on this point: "No, we don't house many—not over 10 per cent, and we would sell what houses we have if we could. We pay our workers enough

to live as they want to. I want workers who have 'get up and get' enough to do things for themselves. People would be better off if the mills did not do so much for them."

Fourthly, there is a steadily growing number of executives who have thought carefully through many phases of the housing and village problems and are beginning to have the feeling that company housing is not an unmixed good for either party. They feel, however, that they are bound down to a vicious circle from which they cannot extricate themselves: isolated location, semi-skilled trades making for occupational mobility and labor turnover, low wages and standards of living, a type of worker unused to home owning and made less so by his sojourn in mill villages, depressions, seasonal work, and changes in the market, all of which add to the hazards of ownership, and so back again to isolation or at least to the problem of a one-industry town. There is much to be said for each of these points as deterrents to home owning and as arguments for the necessity of company housing.

Finally, there are a few who believe that other systems of housing are good for all parties concerned. In fact, some of the men interviewed expressed the belief that home ownership would solve many of their problems. Especially did they believe that it would lessen labor turnover and make steadier and better workers, more thrifty and substantial citizens of the community. One superintendent, a man who thinks through his problems instead of accepting the customary way of doing things, summarized much of this sentiment: "We [mills in general] do not encourage home owning. In fact, our rents and accommodations discourage it greatly, but I think we make a mistake to do it. We would all be better off, mill, workers, and all, and would certainly have better citizens. If we would even charge what the service costs it would make home owning more attractive." He might well have said "make it possible." At present the mill worker who buys a home is not only giving hostages to fortune in thus rendering his labor less mobile, but he is actually losing money every day he lives in his own house. And he knows it. Some half dozen executives cited cases, and doubtless many others could have done so, of employees who own houses which they rent to other people at twice or three times the sum for which they secure one

from the mill company for their own use. Several managers of mills built where there had been something of a settlement and a sprinkling of home owners said that the owners have gradually persuaded the mill to buy their houses and in many cases have continued to live in them at the nominal rents prevailing in the village. The president of one mill so situated had not been eager to buy these private lots and houses. The owners, by deliberately renting to undesirable tenants, forced the mill to buy in order to rid the community of such tenants. In a few cases homes sold to the operatives by the mill have been repurchased because the holders found they were paying rather dearly for a sentiment. A group of mills which employ many home owners has offers from these workers to sell their houses every year when tax paying time comes around.

A few managers said that they could see no difference in the quality or steadiness of home-owning and renting workers, but these were rather rare. The great majority of men whose opinion on this point was asked expressed themselves in a more or less emphatic manner in favor of personal ownership. Some of them were doubtless paying conventional respect to the American tradition of home ownership—offering tribute to a system, the passing of which it is fashionable to lament but which they think it is profitable for them to help pass. One manager expressed quite frankly a sentiment which was interesting for its revelation: "If they get to saving that way they might get too rich and would not work. I don't think the mills in this section are ready for it yet." Some of the others who expressed themselves as favoring home ownership had little basis for their opinion except a very general impression. Certainly they had no record as to the length of service of the two classes of workers; and any sort of record as to quality of service is unheard of in most Southern mills. On the other hand it must be admitted that in a small concern the manager knows the individual workers and his work; what is more, he knows the man's family and his status in the village. Thus these opinions based on years of experience with the same workers are not quite so poor a gauge as they may appear. At least one group of mills which kept a record of the length of service of home owners and renters found that home owners worked three times as long on an average as non-owners of homes; that

91 per cent of them gave notice when leaving, whereas only 77 per cent of the non-owners gave notice; that they returned to the employ of the company more often, and so gave a longer total service.

Of this relatively large group of mill managers who express approval of home ownership only a few have done anything to promote it. A few cotton mills and some hosiery mills employ home owners who bought through the local building and loan associations. One manager of such a mill added that most of the people who bought homes years ago when the mill first started have now gone into other employment—only two are still working for the mill. A new mill under Northern management built about half enough houses for the operatives but found that with its high wage scale it could attract all the workers needed. When it was decided to double the capacity of the mill no additional houses were planned. Over half of their workers are home owners coming from the surburban and rural community around the mill, and when the addition is in operation fully three-fourths will be.

The most common form of encouragement to home ownership has been the sale of lots on easy terms or loans for purchases from other landlords than the mill. All of these projects have not been happy or successful. The Caraleigh Mills at Raleigh, started in 1892, have always sold lots to employees, upon which they build through building and loan associations, or otherwise, as they please or can. But at times the children have not followed the example of thrifty parents, being indifferent workers or citizens or simply preferring to move. Whenever a property has come up for sale the mill has bought it at the market price since it is quite near the mill. The St. Paul Cotton Mills started with a similar policy nearly twenty years ago, lending money for the building of houses, and in some cases buying a house for an employee and allowing him to repay the mill on long terms. About a dozen employees were aided in that way, but all of them have since sold the homes and moved away. The plan was so ineffective in building up a group of steady workers that the company changed its policy in this regard about seven or eight years ago. About nineteen years ago the Chadwick-Hoskins Company tried an experiment in home owning. They laid off a section of lots to sell to

employees at $200 each lot, which could be paid for over a long term of years, sometimes as long as ten or twelve years, so that the buyers could carry the payments on the house also. These lots are now worth from $1,000 to $1,500 each, and many of them have changed hands. Not a single one of the original purchasers now works for the company. Some thirty employees availed themselves of this offer, which stood open for many years but which has now been discontinued for some time because it was judged a failure.

Certain other experiments have been more successful. A medium-sized hosiery mill has aided thirteen families to own homes by means of loans to buy the lots, so that they can afterwards secure aid from the building and loan association. This method has been followed in several cases. Another mill lends money on the employee's personal note and charges no interest for it. Still another method consists of personal loans through the mill. Occasionally this amounts merely to endorsing an employee's note and may involve no actual outlay of money by the executive or the mill. One mill president who is personally interested in helping young employees buy their homes not only aids them financially with loans but indulges his hobby of building the houses for them. He uses the mill's purchasing facilities and contacts and his own experience in building, even keeping a general oversight of the process, and he makes something of a game of getting the houses built as cheaply as possible. Another company is thoroughly enough convinced of the value of home-owning employees to sell them lots on easy terms, help them get money through the building and loan association, and allow them water and lights on the same basis as those living in mill houses, so that the privately owned homes can be as attractive and well equipped as those in the mill village. The Durham Hosiery Company has decided to discontinue its company housing activities in Durham. It is selling its houses as rapidly as possible, but to outsiders as well as to employees. Few of the latter are buying.

But after all, as is apparent from these scattered instances, even the mills that are making some efforts or trying some experiments with home owning are really only playing at the project. So far it is largely a hobby or an experiment or the outcome of personal relations. So far it has involved only the

building of new houses and not the sale of those in the main part of the village, for almost every executive will maintain that if the company is going to have a village it cannot afford to sell lots in the most advantageous spots near the mill lest they fall into the hands of petty shopkeepers or even of bootleggers and the mill have no redress or power to remove undesirables.

Up to the present, then, experiments in fostering home owning have not reached such proportions in any company as to be of importance either in housing workers or in the relation of the workers to the mill. Yet certainly, when it reaches the point where a large number own homes, there will be some demand for adjustments in rents or wages or subsidy. A few companies employing large numbers of operatives who own or rent from private landlords have already begun to receive protests from them. The workers' insistence on selling to the mill and yet on continuing to live in the house is a recognition of the impossibility of making ownership pay; some have even asked the mill to lease the houses and rent to themselves at the same nominal rates as the mill houses pay. And some mills do this very thing. Still other workers, especially those who pay high rents, have asked that the mill give them a bonus or subsidy so that their wages will be equal to wages of the employees who live in the mill houses. If the scale of wages is to depend on a worker's ownership or rental of a home it can be easily seen that even this very slight trend toward ownership will require adjustments which will need frank recognition and a square meeting of the issue on the part of the mills. Some feel that it would be better if more operatives owned their homes; some are plainly skeptical lest such a change may involve more troubles than advantages. But even in the present situation, with the mills housing only about 70 per cent of their workers, the problem is clearly present. Thus far, however, it has not become so insistent as to disturb greatly the traditional methods of village administration.

CHAPTER XII

CROSS SECTIONS OF WELFARE PROGRAMS

THIS DETAILED discussion of the history, present status, and probable trends in the different phases of outside activities of the mills still leaves a question unanswered. What constitutes the entire welfare program of the average mill? If there is no such thing as an average mill, what do various types of mills do? If age, location, product, character of the manager—a dozen factors—so affect the welfare work that classification into types is misleading, what constitutes the total program of actual mills which have welfare work varying in complexity? For besides knowing the nature of the activities and the frequency with which they are found, the specialist and the average citizen alike are further interested in knowing how many of them are gathered together in one village. In other words, to this horizontal division of the subject there should be added at least a brief treatment along vertical lines.

The following cases are given as examples, not as types. For convenience they are arranged roughly in the order of elaborateness of the welfare program, although occasionally a case is thrown in out of this order to show how another mill, ostensibly very similar, has developed different outside activities. The order chosen is that of descending complexity. It is the natural order of proceeding from the known to the unknown for elaborate schemes have been described so often that they are somewhat familiar to all. Most people do not know and cannot well imagine what a company can do if it has no such welfare machinery. What such an arrangement loses in emphasis it gains in truth in at least one sense: there are very few companies with a staff, expensive equipment, and welfare activities such as the first case outlined—probably a dozen in the entire South; there are more which have two or three workers, moderate equipment and programs—a dozen in North Carolina alone; there are even more with one worker, little equipment, and activities in proportion; there are innumerable

plants with only the informal, spasmodic activities which are carried on subject to varying needs, to changes in coöperating agencies, to the state of the market, and to the mood of the manager. On the basis of the number of operatives and families served, this order of treatment gives a picture relatively less accurate since the large companies more frequently have numerous outside activities. But there are so many more of the smaller plants, especially in North Carolina, that even in this respect such an order of treatment is justifiable. The descriptions of the cases are concerned with the present status. References are made to their history only when it is necessary to make some point clear.

A. ELABORATE PROGRAMS OF LARGE MILLS

I. In the case of the most elaborate welfare program it will perhaps be sufficient to list topically the various kinds of activities, as follows:

1. Schools
   - *a)* Provision of buildings
   - *b)* Term and salaries supplemented for white and colored graded schools
   - *c)* Public school music teacher
   - *d)* Kindergarten
   - *e)* Aid by welfare workers to Parent-Teacher Association
   - *f)* Christmas treat to all school children
2. Night Schools
   - *a)* Organization and aid to vocational classes
   - *b)* Organization and operation of elementary classes
3. Welfare Department (with staff of five or six workers)
   - *a)* Home care and training
     - (1) Demonstration home with classes in cooking, sewing, child-feeding, etc. for mothers, housewives, employed girls and women, and for upper grades of the school
     - (2) Cannery
     - (3) Home visiting and individual instruction
   - *b)* Health work with three or four nurses
     - (1) Classes in home nursing, health, and hygiene
     - (2) Mothers' meetings
     - (3) Prenatal care
     - (4) Bedside nursing
     - (5) Visiting nursing to homes and schools
     - (6) Annual mass meeting on health with distribution of literature

(7) Clinics: baby, dental, tonsil, etc.

c) Social features: frequent entertainments for clubs and entire community such as banquets, amateur theatricals, picnics, fairs, flower shows, parties on holidays such as Halloween, etc.

d) Coöperation with Red Cross and county welfare officers

4. Y.M.C.A. with department for women and girls as well as men and boys

a) Equipment: building costing a quarter of a million dollars with several full-time and many part-time workers

b) Athletics: gymnasium, swimming, bowling, volley ball, basketball, tennis, horse shoes, baseball

c) Music: glee club, band, fife and drum corps, community sings

d) Classes and clubs: life-saving, woodcraft, bird life, manual training, vacation Bible school, literary club, boy scouts, camping clubs, etc.

e) General: reading room, picture shows, tournaments, field days, community club

f) Negro Y.M.C.A.

5. Housing

a) Model houses[1]

b) Home beautification: annual distribution of flower seeds and bulbs with prizes for best results

c) Gardens plowed annually and prizes for best results

d) Inspection of premises and prizes for improvement

6. Churches

a) Building lots

b) Aid in building—$4.00 from the company to $1.00 by the church members

c) Parsonages rent free

d) Aid in church and Sunday school running expenses

7. Miscellaneous

a) Sale of wood and coal at cost

b) Company store

c) Dairy farm

d) Stock farm providing meat and beef to company store

e) Flour mill

f) Halls for fraternal orders

g) Innumerable small services for individuals and families by welfare workers, nurses, Y.M.C.A. staff as well as superintendents, etc.

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[1]Housing in this and any such company is usually partly welfare expense because every time additions to the village are needed the company builds houses which at the time are much better than necessity or the competition of neighboring plants demands. The older houses, unless brought up to date, should not be counted as welfare work. See chap. X, pp. 234-35.

II. A less elaborate but still fairly complete program is carried on by another large plant. In 1920 the mill replaced the school it built twenty years before with a handsome brick building costing $200,000. The new school serves the large mill village and the surrounding country. The mill continues to supplement the six months' county term. Teachers in the schools and foremen have taught night classes spasmodically since 1918, the mill paying the local fourth of the cost and providing rooms.

The tenement house used as a center for community work was replaced in 1919 by a building costing $125,000. A full-time man worker with several part-time assistants has gymnasium classes, athletics, clubs for boys, a reading room, social rooms for games, etc. These workers also coöperate with the various church groups. A full-time domestic science teacher paid by the State Department of Home Economics has rooms and equipment in the building for classes of village women in cooking, sewing, and child-feeding. The girls in the upper grades at school come here also for their regular required courses in domestic science. The building contains a picture show, a group of service shops—barber and beauty shops, cleaning and pressing club—rented at nominal rates to individual operators. The mill buys the instruments for a band and pays a man who works in the mill extra for instructing. The company leveled a space for a ball ground, built a grandstand, and fenced the park. The ball team runs on gate receipts.

The company is supposed to have set up a policy of aiding 20 per cent on church building, but as a matter of fact in each case it gives considerably more. Recently all three churches have built new buildings costing $20,000, $30,000, and $100,000, respectively. Aid by the company and personal gifts of the executives amounted to about half the cost of the first two, and considerably more than half of the last—a memorial to the founder of the mills, the father of the present chief owner. Each church has the use of a house for a parsonage rent free, with water and lights furnished. The company helps regularly each month on pastor's salary and other expenses.

The "company store" is really a group of stores—department, drug, hardware, furniture, grocery, and market. These were started when the village was isolated, "for the convenience

and protection of the people." With good roads, automobiles, and the growth of towns near by they no longer make money; in fact they have lost for the last six or eight years.

All the five hundred houses have electric lights, about one-fourth have running water, and somewhat less have sewerage and baths. The village has been well laid out on a hilly site. A great deal of terracing, rock retaining wall, variety in the houses and plenty of trees all help to make an attractive town. The leveling of the yards or the prizes, or both, have encouraged the raising of many flowers; house and village inspection with its rules and its prizes has resulted in well-kept premises. Although the equipment of the houses is not up-to-date enough to cause the village to count as welfare work, there is considerable money and thought expended on it in other ways.

III. The two good-sized plants of a company located within the limits of one of the largest towns of the state present a different sort of welfare program. Although inside the city school district, and after the first few years inside the city limits, the company built a schoolhouse and lent it to the city in order to have the school more convenient than the nearest city building, a mile and a half away. As the village grew and the town developed in the direction of the mill, a city school was built for that end of town. The mills then turned the old schoolhouse over to be used as a church. In addition they have "practically built all three churches in this end of town" and contribute to their running expenses each year.

For twenty-five years the village had community work put on spasmodically by volunteers from the adjoining city—a day nursery, cooking classes, sewing classes, and the like. The company always furnished a tenement house and lent its influence, and the missionary group did the rest until their interest ran out; and after a time another group would start something else. In 1918 the mills invested $75,000 in a community house and grounds: tennis courts, outdoor swimming pool, baseball ground, domestic science equipment, reading room, and moving picture show. A full-time man trained in Y.M.C.A. work was put in charge with an assistant. The domestic science teacher was paid partly by the State Department of Home Economics and partly by the mill. In 1926 all the recreational programs centering inside the building were discontinued be-

cause of lack of interest on the part of the man in charge and of the villagers. "They are so handy to the city movies they prefer to go there even though we charged only a nominal admission fee of five cents and ran at a loss." The grounds, athletic courts, and swimming pool were put in charge of a villager and his wife who simply act as caretakers, the people using them as they choose.

Since 1918 also, the village has had the services of a visiting nurse. Her salary is paid by the company but through the city nursing association, which hires the nurse and directs her work. Since the workers had lost interest in the community program, inquiry was made as to the interest in this service. "It is hard to tell whether they like it or not. They don't ever say that they like it or that they appreciate it, but I suppose we should not expect that. We agreed that if they did not like it we would hear of it in criticism or in the way they treated the nurse. They all seem to like her and call for her when they need her."

The company started group insurance early in 1926 in the hope of reducing labor turnover, the employees paying one-third and the company two-thirds of the premium. The company houses only one-third of the operatives of one plant and not more than two-thirds of those of the other. All houses have running water and inside toilets. The company installed the sewerage system in 1923 at a cost of $30,000. According to an estimate of the various expenses an annual subsidy of about $167 per house is necessary.

B. A LARGE MILL WITH NO WELFARE PROGRAM

Most large mills or companies have welfare work, but not all. Perhaps it is only fair to include here by ways of contrast a large company that does little outside work and never has had anything that could be called a welfare program. This company includes most of the plants in a good-sized textile town, some being in the town proper, others lying near by. The company's share in the support of the schools has always been through taxes; the influence of its officials is said to be on the side of movements for better schools—bond issues for school buildings and so on. As representatives of the biggest taxpay-

ers in the district they have, of course, been unusually powerful. The head of the organization is a member of the school board.

All the people in the town attend the same churches. While the officials of the company are expected to contribute liberally, only recently has the company as such been called upon except for running expenses. During recent building programs one church after another has asked for and received aid so that the precedent is well set. The company built a little chapel for Sunday school for the two outlying villages some eight or ten years ago, but it died out because the people preferred to come to town. The general manager has recently opposed a movement to build a church out there because he thinks it is bad policy to multiply weak churches and to isolate those two small villages.

The company used to operate a company store. It has had nurses in case of epidemics and at the time of the interview was considering putting on a full-time visiting nurse. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has a nurse for the town. Night classes in vocational subjects went along very well for several years under the leadership of one of the younger men in the managerial group; more recently they were turned over to the school principal, who has not taken much interest in them. The company supports the boy scout troop and aids the baseball team.

About 250 of the 300 houses have running water; about 160 have inside toilets. In past years the company made loans to employees wanting to build, but this has not been done lately as there is not much demand for it. The manager feels that although home owning is a fine thing theoretically, it is hardly feasible yet as it does not pay the worker and ties him down too much.

C. PROGRAMS WITH ONE COMMUNITY WORKER

I. Next after the welfare program with a staff of workers comes the plant, usually of medium size, which has one welfare worker. Sometimes, however, such a company manages to carry on a great many outside activities. The mill under discussion is such a one. The school is a consolidated county school serving four mill villages and a considerable farming area. The

mills lent money during the War in order to get the school built when it was not possible to issue bonds. Later it was difficult to vote the bonds as the farm population was opposed to it, and the mill population, highly mobile just then, barely mustered enough votes to pass it. Later a teacherage was added and the school property now represents an investment of $175,000. From his familiarity with the details and his enthusiasm and pride in its present standing one does not need to be told that the mill superintendent was one of the chief leaders in the movement.

The mill gave $9,000 out of $20,000 spent for a new Methodist church in the village. Other denominations share in the service or belong to churches of their faith in neighboring villages. After various methods of aiding boy scouts, none very successful, the mill is now coöperating in a county-wide scout council. The wife of the superintendent helps a great deal with church work and women's groups, teaches night classes for girls, and, like her husband, aids in countless ways as leader for informal groups and social affairs.

The one person employed for such leadership is a combination nurse and community worker. A converted tenement house provides club room and a reading room. She has classes in nursing, cooking, sewing, helps in cases of sickness, assists the various clubs in putting on socials, keeps an eye on the tennis and croquet courts near by, renders first aid, conducts a Saturday afternoon kindergarten—in short has all the many duties of the general community worker.

As regards modern conveniences the houses are about average; in appearance they are considerably above the average, being well built, attractively designed, and varied bungalows. Sanitation is better looked after than in most villages; garbage and trash removal each week results in tidy yards and premises. Village expense is reckoned at $250 per house annually above return through rent.

II. A mill very similar in size and in location and having also a single worker has a much simpler program. A community house costing around $5,000 provides a center for clubs, for mothers, girls, boys, and little children. Sewing classes are carried on most of the time; classes in nursing, cooking, and hygiene spasmodically. The county Red Cross

nurse gives the classes in health education, and the county demonstration agent coöperates at various times. The mill, along with others, contributes to the Y.M.C.A. of the adjoining town and provides transportation for the boys to go down on the nights set apart for industrial clubs. More recently the Y.M.C.A. boys' worker also comes out to the village for clubs and other work.

Aid to churches has apparently consisted entirely of allowing each denomination in turn to use the community house for services until it was ready and able to build a church. A special tax-consolidated school serves the village. Housing is about average in appearance but well above average in equipment: electric lights, kitchen sink, bath, sewerage, and kitchen ranges with water-back. Large lots and good gardens, tidy premises, wide streets with plenty of fine trees all show that some attention, interest, and money are expended on them.

D. VILLAGE PROGRAMS WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

I. Some mills manage to have a fairly good welfare program without a regular welfare worker. Naturally, they have to be, as in the present case, near or in cities having agencies upon which they can call for coöperation. A welfare worker employed some years ago was not replaced when she left. The tenement house converted into a club room and community center is still used for meetings of various clubs of the villages, for a girls' club led by the Y.W.C.A. worker from the city, boys' club led by the Y.M.C.A. worker, and other groups headed by various volunteers from town. Besides contributions to the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. the mill contributes to the city playground association and provides a park where a playground worker conducts supervised play for children and adults. A few of the women attend cooking classes in town put on by the county demonstration agent. Some of the men attend the vocational classes sponsored by the city woman's club, the mill paying its pro rata part of the local fourth of the salaries.

The company counts heavily on the coöperation of the county health officers to aid the practical nurse in the village who does bedside nursing. The Metropolitan nurse of the city serves the numerous policyholders in the village. There is no

mill church *per se*, and the mill contributes upon solicitation to all the churches serving its employees. Last year, for example, it contributed $5,000 to a building program of $40,000 carried on by one church.

When the village was taken into town limits the manager feared that the city system of book rentals might prevent some children from going to school or furnish some parents an excuse for not sending them. The mill therefore pays the fee for all children of employees whether they live in the village or not. This amounts to about $600 a year.

The older tenement houses of this company are below average in appearance and conveniences. Those built more recently are model, up-to-date bungalows.

II. A mill that has fewer agencies to call upon has a correspondingly simpler welfare program if it does not choose to put on one itself. The manager of a large mill, located in a much smaller town than in the preceding case, has a very definite conviction that the village should be in all essentials a part of the town. Thus there are no village churches and no mill aid to churches except in the form of individual contributions by the manager. There is no separate school. The mill has no welfare worker. One of the churches employs a woman for home visiting and religious work in the village. There is no Y.M.C.A. or nursing or recreational agency in the town, and so none to operate in the village. Being at some distance from the county seat it is sometimes difficult to get coöperation and assistance from the county agents. The mill assists a ball team and a band, carries group insurance, and runs a night school. The houses are monotonous but comfortable, averaging somewhat larger than usual, and being equipped with lights, running water, and a sewerage system.

E. SIMPLE PROGRAMS WITH A SPECIAL EMPHASIS

I. Sometimes a medium-sized or small mill which has a single or perhaps a part-time welfare worker specializes on some one interest. The superintendent of such a mill is evidently a very religious man, keenly interested himself in Sunday school and doing much to foster it. The welfare worker does a great deal of Sunday school and other religious work. She also has

classes and clubs, cares for the sick, has play hours for the children and sociables and parties for the young people and older folks as well. From the superintendent's knowledge and interest in the details of the village social, recreational, and religious life we can be sure that he takes a very active personal part in it. The mill aids baseball teams and night classes, the latter being rather spasmodic. Housing is below average in appearance and equipment, but the village is tidy and the premises clean.

II. Another village specializes in health work and sanitation. Garbage and refuse collection three times a week, various measures to prevent flies, and close house inspection make up the program as regards houses and village. A trained nurse has a first-aid room and treats minor ills at her office besides home visiting, individual instruction, and group training of mothers in care of babies and the sick. A tonsil clinic is held annually; school children are weighed and measured periodically, and all those undernourished are given a quart of milk a day. A large field of turnips and other greens provides free to the villagers those necessary elements to the diet and is considered a health measure.

Of course there are other activities as well: aid to churches, night classes, a band, ball teams. In 1918 the mill built an excellent school at a cost of $71,000, which the county runs seven months and the mills carries on for two months longer.

III. The activities of another mill have centered somewhat around savings and thrift. It has always had a savings plan. For some eight years it has had group insurance which carries a nursing service. The owner is particularly proud of a co-operative store which has been highly successful. Houses with lights, running water, and sewerage are provided rent free. The mill has always been inside city limits and so has had no relations to schools; its limited experience in providing a small chapel for church services has not been particularly happy. The company contributes heavily to the Y.M.C.A., which provides leadership for athletics and socials.

IV. The manager of one textile plant—not a regular cotton mill—insisted that "we have no outside activities, though we always help out an employee who is in trouble." Further questions brought out the fact that one of his great interests has

long been encouraging employees to own homes. He thinks that 75 per cent of them do, bought mostly through building and loan associations. The company, or rather some official in it personally, endorses the notes to the association. The remainder of the welfare work consists of contributions to the Y.M.C.A., which serves the large textile town, to the salary of a nurse serving several plants, and to the churches in the neighborhood, which are attended by a considerable number of its employees.

F. COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS

I. Several small mills in a town often coöperate in employing a nurse, or supporting a Y.M.C.A. Sometimes public-spirited citizens aid by their contributions. There are some cases, like the one here described, of a welfare worker being supported in this way. She gives group and individual instruction in care of the sick and in sanitation and health. She does much religious work in Sunday school and in "working up attendance to Sunday school." She looks after cases needing relief and administers funds collected for the associated charities. If a family needs more than small and immediate aid she calls on the employer for additional assistance. Other outside work of the company consists of aid to churches—building and running expenses—night classes and ball teams.

II. The expense of the chief welfare activity in some mill villages, as in the present case, is borne partly by the operatives. A "company doctor" attends in all cases of illness in those families which contribute weekly to a fund for payment of his services. Their contribution constitutes almost all that is given him for this attention. The mill's expense for outside activities is chiefly for a group insurance policy and for the building of a church and a school. The new school cost $12,000, of which the mill gave $7,000. Aid of night schools, loans to workers in case of illness, and a company store, recently abandoned, complete the program.

G. A PROGRAM OF THE FUTURE

The managers of some of the newer mills having a very simple program at present are looking forward to gradual

expansion later. In the present case a village laid out by a landscape architect and made up of model houses with modern conveniences represents the chief outlay so far and forms the basis for a more ambitious scheme. For example, the manager plans to replace the tenement house school with an adequate building which will house the schools and form a community center. A small chapel will be replaced by at least two churches for the two leading denominations, the manager expecting the mill to give a large part of the cost. The reservoir for the water supply of the mill and the dye house form a good-sized lake which he plans to develop into a place of beauty as a center for a community park with swimming, boating, and picnic grounds. He plans to stock it with fish for the further pleasure of the villagers. He spends so much more energy and money on general village and mill housekeeping than most managers that this should probably count as welfare expense as much as his aid to ball teams and his personal leadership in the Sunday school.

H. ABANDONED SCHEMES

I. Some companies have abandoned or curtailed their welfare programs. It may be well to describe a few of these. For example, one group of mills with a program as elaborate as, though somewhat different from, the case described on p. 280 abandoned the entire scheme upon a change in management and in market conditions. Such a case is very unusual. More common in large companies is curtailment, as described on p. 281 or, in small companies virtual abandonment as in the present case. A small mill of long standing had gradually worked through the stages of aid to school and churches, a company store, and other such separate activities until finally it employed a welfare worker who performed all the functions of a single general worker in a small village: classes, visiting, recreational work, nursing, attention to sanitation, and all sorts of individual and community uplift. For reasons that were never made quite clear to the interviewer, this worker was discontinued, leaving the older welfare activities alone again.

II. More understandable perhaps was the discontinuance of a worker at a tiny surburban mill and a substitution of a

committee of the village women to look after many matters formerly attended to by the welfare worker. The village has the services of a county nurse when necessary. The mill carries group insurance, aids a rather lifeless baseball team and other athletics, gives treats at Christmas, and materially aids the union Sunday school to which it turned over the schoolhouse now abandoned for the city system.

J. "FAMILY" WELFARE WORK

I. There are many "family mills" in North Carolina, some grown to great organizations with elaborate welfare schemes now carried on by paid leaders. Redolent of the older days and still fairly common are the small mills where the chief owner is financial, production, and village manager, group leader, relief agent, and general father confessor. A list of his activities is a barren business; really to feel the situation one should hear the history of the village institutions. In the present case there was his struggle to secure and to keep the consolidated school near the village. There is his and everybody's pride in the accredited high school and pleasure in the annual commencement. There is his loyalty to the little church and the work of himself, his wife, and daughter in it. There is the adjustment of work hours and shifts to enable the mill to use as much as possible of the water power, taken directly from the stream with no reservoir, and yet not keep the workers in the mill all night. There are the stopping of the mill for the camp meeting, the company store, aid to a band, the leveling of a ball ground at a cost of a thousand dollars, and aid to the very live team. Part of the houses are provided with modern conveniences; the rest are not, because the site is so hilly as to make water and sewerage installation very expensive. All the way through one sees evidences of adjustment, of personal acquaintance and interest on the part of both employer and employee.

II. Quite the reverse has been true in the past of another small and equally old mill that has changed hands frequently throughout its history. But the present owner is putting in electric lights, supplementing the school term, giving a Christmas treat to the children, making loans in case of sickness,

and trying to work up interest in a ball team. Such a program is so new and advanced that the oldest employee to be found was quite amazed and delighted.

K. MINIMUM OF OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

I. The manager of a very new mill prides himself on the fact that he does no welfare work—that he pays good wages instead. But he also prides himself on a village that costs 40 per cent more than he could have built it for if he had not chosen to erect larger, more substantial, and better-equipped houses than are common. This was also one of the few cases where a boarding house might rightly be considered a welfare activity.

II. Hosiery mills usually carry on little in the way of outside activities. The remaining cases are fairly typical. One plant, large as hosiery mills go, "helps the ball boys," contributes along with other plants to the salary of a visiting nurse, sells wood and coal at cost, and makes loans or endorses notes to enable employees to buy their homes.

III. Another large hosiery mill carries group insurance. It has an arrangement with a coal yard to let employees have coal at cost; the mill pays for it and allows the worker to repay it gradually.

IV. A third hosiery mill employs a practical nurse for service to families of employees.

V. The manager of one very small hosiery mill gives a Christmas treat to each employee and adds his personal contributions when "the girls are making up money" to help someone who is sick or in need.

These cases are all more or less individual; twice the number would not remedy that fault. But if the programs are not typical they are to a degree representative of what the mills of North Carolina are doing in the way of outside activities for their employees. These lists are as bare as catalogues, and in many respects as monotonous as the villages are to the casual observer. The mere expositor waits upon the artist and the dramatist. Through such mediums alone can we secure a realistic portrayal of the human interplay. The real interest, sense of duty, hope of profit, paternalism, or enthusiasm of

the employer, the appreciation, coöperation, apathy or resentment on the part of the worker need a quickening interpretation. There could be stories of generous gifts, of arrogant concessions, of mean haggling, of a self-respecting acceptance, of obsequiousness or total lack of understanding of the import of the whole matter whether good or bad. There are human stories, many of them, in every welfare program.

CHAPTER XIII

OPINIONS OF WELFARE WORK: MANAGEMENT, COMMUNITY WORKERS, AND EMPLOYEES

Opinions and attitudes have had much to do with the development of extra-mill activities. The total forces back of this development constitute a field in which there is little scientific knowledge because accurate information has been so hard to get. Extra-mill activities are affected by manifold conditions and variations of market, management, men, physical layout, and location. Daring indeed would be the man or woman who would presume to offer a wise diagnosis of a community situation in a given village and a wise prognosis for the guidance of a community program. Hence most of the extra-mill activities have proceeded by rule of thumb or under the control of attitudes or opinions based on feelings. It is of little value to say that the most divergent opinions within the same group are all to a certain extent wrong. The fact remains that on a subject which has been highly controversial for so long and on which there is so little accurate information, feelings, prejudices, and opinions take the place of clear observations, analysis, and reason. The writer can claim no immunity from this general infirmity. Her chief difficulty is that she has both worked in the midst of the mill and observed it from the side lines. She has been concerned with extra-mill activities as a practical problem in administration and as a theoretical question of social valuation. She has known enough mill managers to be aware that they can be public spirited leaders of men or grasping, narrow exploiters of them, or almost anything between. She has known enough mill workers to be aware that they can be poor makeshifts for men with whom to try to manufacture cloth or to build a community; or they can be as fine friends and as fine citizens as anyone would desire. And so the writer is in the anomalous position of being at once a champion and an adversary—a strange creature divided against itself,

and equally disliked and distrusted by defenders of the mill and by its critics.

Because of this wide variety of opinion an effort has been made to withhold as much expression of it as possible from the discussions which have preceded this chapter, except where such expression was immediately necessary to make a point clear. It is given here in as much detail as possible in order that the reader may see the diversity of its conflicting views, and may judge for himself the influence of this elaborate mosaic of opinion. If at times it seems to be opinion about the mills in general rather than about their welfare work this is because opinion about the whole mill economy is bound up with its outside activities, its welfare work, and its village.

Because of its importance in the history and development of extra-mill activities it is appropriate to consider here certain blocks of opinion as it finds expression in individuals or groups who by virtue of their position have the power to affect the life of the mills. The divisions cut across lines of attack and defense, for there are some pros and some cons in every group. First in importance, perhaps, is the managerial group —what they think and what they think the workers think. Secondly, there is local sentiment and opinion, especially that held by teachers, ministers, and other public and semi-public officials whose duties bring them in contact with the mill workers. This block of opinion is reflected to a greater or less degree in the mind of every citizen of the greater communities to which the villages belong. There is, finally, that larger public opinion which is expressed and created by newspapers and magazines, and is found in the preconceived notions of even the foreign visitor. It is effective in the sheer force by which it brings gradual but profound changes in general mill policy.

REASONS FOR CONFLICT OF OPINION AMONG MANAGERS

For practical and immediate effects upon the village and its community life the opinions of the managers are of prime importance. They initiate most new departures; they encourage the development of old enterprises; they approve and offer their prestige and financial aid to almost all employee or volunteer efforts. As has already been suggested in the discussions of

special forms of outside work, the opinions which managers hold of all forms of welfare work vary because of their experience with it. These in turn have been the result of personal attitudes, of location of their mills, of business success, of the ability of their welfare workers, and of the general character and tone of the employee groups. In other words, these opinions are the result of the interaction of a thousand and one human, technical, and business forces. To these forces has been added in the last decade another quite as productive of diversity in opinion. This is the nation-wide insistence on discarding all ideas of paternalism and philanthropy in considering the relations of employee and employer, and justifying all extra-plant activities on the basis of "good business." It is the insistence that first of all these activites must pay in dollars and cents or there will be something disrespectable—almost shameful—about them. This was perhaps a logical development in other sections of the country. The rapid rise of large corporations precluded all personal touch between the rank and file and the higher-ups. The preponderance of immigrant labor widened the gap. The unions, always alert to factors that undermine the solidarity of the workers, had their suspicions strengthened to conviction when they saw company after company changing its personnel policy as it began to feel the pressure of production and the scarcity of labor. It was hardly the moment for such a company to declare that it had had a change of heart; it was far more convincing to say that it had had a change of head—that the balance sheet showed plainly that its welfare activities paid. No doubt these companies were perfectly sincere in their sedulous avoidance of all claim to philanthropic and benevolent motives and in their wish to put all activities not strictly concerned with work and wages on a business basis. No doubt, also, that this is the one permanent and universal basis upon which to build up activities for the well-being of the working force.

But the spread of this new idea and the consequent disrepute of "welfare work" certainly played havoc with notions which had been accepted so long in the Southern mills that they were well-nigh traditional. We have already observed how the very building of the mills which would give work to idle or at least miserably paid hands was almost a philanthropy. Commenda-

tion of the Christian spirit exhibited in building decent homes and furnishing a simple church and a simpler school gave the stamp of public and community approval to the philanthropic action of the individual mill owner. This attitude increased with the number and prosperity of the mills. It was not only highly commendable to "do things for our people," and "not let them suffer," but the mill which did not "look out for them" was actually held in disfavor. As this survey has shown, not many earlier mills carried on much in the way of a formal program, but there can be no doubt as to the great amount of informal, personal work. Small units, close intimate knowledge of the workers, absence of both foreigners and unions, a rural tenant people willing and more or less accustomed to depend on a composite landlord-employer-leader—everything was the opposite of the situation in other parts of the country.

Many mill men of course justified the expense of welfare activities to themselves and their boards of directors by adding that such things paid. But this was merely an additional reason—and incidentally one that they could not prove!—for doing what was the duty and should be the pleasure of a high-minded employer. An examination of the voluminous literature on the mills reveals this growing interest in the financial value of welfare work.

The idea has played havoc with the former notion because the two are fundamentally incompatible. It may be all right to be wholly selfish in spending the mill's money for a swimming pool or for cooking classes if the resulting morale and physical well-being bring in interest on one's financial investment. It may be equally all right to do these things from a love of humanity or a satisfaction in doing good. But can one be coldly grasping and beautifully generous with the same dollar? The mill owner today almost always gives you some of both reasons for his welfare work But it is an untenable position and he must feel that it is—that he is offering two opposite reasons—and you may take whichever pleases you. As a result a new point for criticism and for defense has been added to the already long list. Critics can and do say now that the mill owner is not even a benevolent despot—that he is a consummate hypocrite. For not many are willing to take the stand

that one prominent mill man in North Carolina took in a meeting during which a publicist and several educational and religious leaders had deplored and condemned paternalism. He frankly took up the cudgels for it: if paternalism makes a man a more efficient and better-paid worker, if it makes him a more interested and intelligent citizen, a more responsible parent, a more alert, alive individual, then what is the matter with paternalism? He could not prove that his paternalistic program does all these things. He could only say that it aims at them and attempts them. But his critics could not prove that it did none of these things, and they were obliged to admit the worthiness of its ideals.

Not many are willing to defend their programs so unequivocally as paternalism and philanthropy. They are too much torn within themselves. There are many mill executives in North Carolina who do these things from real love of humanity; there may be others who do them from a desire to satisfy their vanity by having the best of one feature or another. Some of these two classes, and many others besides, are obliged further to justify their outside activities on the grounds of financial worth.

OPINIONS OF MILL MANAGERS

It is, therefore, absurd to try to classify the managers of mills on this subject by saying that so many favor and so many oppose welfare work. There are too many shades of opinion between these extremes; there are too many qualifying factors. One may oppose it on principle who considers some activity which he carries on to be highly desirable and valuable. Another may favor it theoretically who has had a painful experience with it in actual practice. And, more surprisingly, some declare that they neither favor welfare work nor engage in it, although specific questions reveal the fact that they aid churches, carry group insurance, have a well worked-out health program, or have built model houses which cost twice what they might easily have done. If we sweep aside such differences of interpretation and definition the writer believes it is not inaccurate to say that 90 per cent of the mill men interviewed for this study believe in, or act as if they believe in, some form of welfare work as an expression not only of the business

relation between employer and employee but of the personal relation as well. Some may be able to show no evidence of welfare work in a disreputable looking village but may be most sympathetic and helpful with cash, credit, and influence to a hard-pressed individual. Some may be very dictatorial in matters of village control who honestly consider that they are promoting valuable social standards. And it must be remembered that such a one is supported in his belief not only by his associates in social and business circles but by many people in the village as well.

Of the plants covered by this study forty (twenty-two of which were hosiery mills) did nothing, so far as the writer was able to discover, that could rightfully be termed welfare work. Some provided housing, to be sure, but of such indifferent value that it could scarcely be termed a form of welfare work. Half of the plants (165) do a little welfare work—some wishing to do more, others doing their little under pressure. Nearly a third (97) do considerable, with perhaps less diversity of spirit.

A more detailed account of attitudes in addition to that scattered throughout the previous discussion of various subjects may be of interest. There was a small sprinkling of men who were outspoken in their opinion that "the people don't appreciate anything you do for them," or "the more you do for them the less they appreciate it." Most of these, however, are proceeding with some pet scheme of their own! Related to this opinion is the belief on the part of many mill managers that the worker would rather have the money that is spent for such things placed in his pay envelope instead. A few of these act on this belief, doing very little outside work and priding themselves on their wage scale. Some, who profess to believe this, proceed as though they actually believed the opposite. One man who has a new and up-to-date village has set aside eight or ten acres, in which are trees and a stream, to be developed later as a park and playground. He plans to employ a welfare worker and to have a Y.M.C.A. Apparently without observing the inconsistency he added, "they don't appreciate such things; they say they would rather have the money in the envelopes, and some resent it as uplift and interference."

Most of the weak points in this internal criticism of welfare

work were very well summarized by another, a thoughtful young manager. He said that though welfare work is a good thing it could easily be carried to such an extreme that the employees would criticize the expenditure. They do not realize that if it were divided up the amount going to each worker would be so small that he would scarcely find any difference in his pay. "They don't understand how much things like that cost, that the company can do them more cheaply than they could individually. And perhaps if they had the total figures the amount would sound large to them. On the other hand, they don't consider that what the company does to make the community a better place to live in would not be done at all if left to them individually. But most important, they don't realize that if they were not getting that money in welfare work they would not get it in wages. Wages are determined by general rates, competition in the labor market, and other such factors far more than they are by what the individual mill manager can *afford* to pay."

REASONS FOR FAILURES

What the employer supposes that the employee thinks is, then, an important factor in the attitude of the former toward welfare work. The process of finding out goes on in a rather blind fashion, by the trial and error process. The employer has a hobby, thinks or hears of some new idea, or is sold a scheme by some enterprising company. He starts it with enthusiasm and often without any preparation. If it succeeds, all is well; if it does not, it is discontinued and another illusion is lost. This lack of preparation is perhaps one of the most fruitful causes of failure and for consequent charges of the workers' lack of appreciation. Note has been made, in describing group insurance schemes, of misunderstandings growing out of the employees' belief that the company was making money out of this activity. Abuse of nursing services or failure to use them arise out of misconceptions as to what their purpose is. Mutual benefits, saving schemes, suggestion systems, and hundreds of others have foundered on similar rocks of misunderstanding of the motives of the company, of lack of confidence in its disinterestedness, or of failure to

prepare the ground properly for the changes. It is seldom that such failures are analyzed to see what the real reason is. They are hastily put down as due to lack of appreciation, typical of such "sorry folks as the cotton mill class."

An excellent though depressing example of such a series of failures is furnished by the experience of a single small mill. In 1916 the manager employed a nurse who did home visiting and gave instruction in the care of babies and of the sick. "She tried to teach them how to live." This was not greatly appreciated, so that when she left the manager tried another idea. He employed a woman to give instruction in gardening and in canning. The mill gave seeds, set up a cannery, and furnished the cans and the labels. The first year the people were very enthusiastic, the second less so, and the third not at all. In the meantime the mill started a band, bought the instruments and the uniforms, and paid an instructor. "It got to be a right good band, used to serenade the manager, go to political meetings, and was in demand for public gatherings." It broke up after two or three years because of internal bickerings. Shortly after that the mill tried to help the baseball team by furnishing it with uniforms. There followed three years of decreasing interest. During the influenza epidemic it was so hard to secure a doctor that the company paid a physician a salary to be sure that the people of the village were properly looked after. There was opposition to this because some people preferred to have their own doctor and did not want the one the mill secured. Just after the war the price of groceries at the regular stores caused so much complaint that the mill started a company store to sell supplies at cost. "But, do you know, some of them would not trade at the store because it did not deliver groceries. You can't do much to help that kind of folks. We would be glad to put on some sort of welfare work now if we had any reason to feel that it would do any good. The community nurse, the county doctor, and the welfare officer do considerable work in the village and are able to accomplish more good than any workers the mill ever had. Their work is always well received by the people, for they feel that these officers have the law behind them, and also that they are not meddling." Not all mills have had as discouraging an experience as this one. It

may be that this plant does have an unusually apathetic group of people, but it is very probable that the greatest difficulty lay in lack of preparation.

The second great cause of failure lies with the welfare workers but indirectly goes back to very definite attitudes on the part of the management. The worker may have no more conception of what her job should be than the employees do, but she is allowed to proceed, perhaps tactless, dictatorial, inefficient, or laboring under other personal or professional faults, with a minimum of preparation in aims and policies, and practically no supervision by the mill management. As has already been made clear in connection with various details of community work, the managers require no report from their special village workers. Most of them pride themselves on the fact that they require none. As a result, the worker has not that very salutary exercise in taking stock periodically both for her own and her employer's benefit. There is no job about the mill that can be more strenuously pursued or more disgracefully neglected than welfare work. It is small wonder that occasionally a worker "lies down on the job." The amazing thing is to find so many managers able to say with enthusiasm that they have conscientious, energetic workers. Perhaps, as some executives pointed out, this is because welfare work is a species of missionary effort, certainly a form of social service, appealing chiefly to serious, earnest women, which accounts for the extraordinary good luck the mills have had with their workers. Certainly few results can be attributed, in North Carolina at least, to previous training of the worker, to advice and preparation by the manager, or to his careful supervision.

In a few cases the failure of welfare work and the consequent ill repute in which it is held by the manager are due to the fact, not that the welfare worker has lain down on the job, but that she has magnified and overdone it. One of the best illustrations of this was given by a frank but enthusiastic manager who had built a new mill and village, of which he was justly proud. At the time he was interviewed he was not at all sure he would provide much welfare work here—his experience in other mills had not made him very happy about it. For, years ago he induced his superior officer

to try some welfare work, and the woman they secured was fine at first. Then with the war, they had more money to spend on such things; so they gave her an assistant and finally made her supervisor of welfare work in their whole chain of mills. "The job went to her head. It got so she thought the mill was run chiefly to provide her with people to entertain. She interfered with the work by getting up outings for the girls and taking them from the mill. The foremen got cross because it tore up their work. She grew outrageously extravagant, made big bills and sent them in for me to O. K. I was opposed to such large expenditures, and besides, as I was to be responsible for paying the bill, I wanted her to come in and talk her projects over. Then, one of the other workers got a bad name for herself—did not keep herself clean personally, and the cooking room and hall that her plant had fitted up for her was a sight to behold. I thought that when we had a woman hired to teach cooking and to have charge of the hall which they used for giving dinners and for meetings, we had a right to expect that she would keep it in order and manage the dinners. But every time a group wanted to give a dinner my wife had to go over and clean up the filthy place and manage the dinner." It apparently took some "diplomacy" and even an outright discharge or two before they were rid of the welfare program.

This case is given in some detail, not because it is typical, but because it illustrates several points quite common in less exaggerated form. There was lack of understanding of the job and of company policy by the worker; she submitted no reports and had no close contacts with the management; she failed to appreciate the fact that if the mill does not run successfully there can be no employees for her to help, to say nothing of frills such as picnics for the girls. It is a form of adjustment to a subordinate position which welfare workers of certain temperament have not been able to make.

ESTIMATES OF NEIGHBORING WELFARE SCHEMES

It is perhaps somewhat a digression, but one illustrating forcibly the great variety of attitudes among mill men toward welfare work, to note here the opinions which they have on

the work of neighboring plants. There is scarcely a mill doing welfare work on any considerable scale toward which a neighboring manager does not look with scorn. Some of these fellow mill executives consider it a waste of money for egotistical display, some a sentimental business, and others meddlesome officiousness. It may be that some are a bit jealous or envious, but if so they are scarcely aware of it themselves. For example, at one mill the writer was referred to Mr. So-and-So at the nearby ——— mill. "He believes in all such stuff; we don't!" And at another, "You ought to go out and see Papa ——— and his community house." Several referred to the failure of the industrial democracy plan at the Durham Hosiery Company and that company's change in policy toward welfare work as a vindication of their own disbelief in it.

In the same town with a manager who tends to sneer at his neighbor's welfare activities one finds another who regretfully says, "We don't do much in that line. Our plant is too small. You'll have to go to see ———," referring to the same neighbor. All over the state, executives tell of inquiring into the workings of certain well-known schemes before starting similar ones in their own mills. There is as much free masonry among managements as there is mobility among workers.

OPINIONS OF WELFARE WORKERS

Several years ago a newspaper man in North Carolina whose interests extended somewhat beyond headlines, breaks, and scoops, heard of a welfare worker who entertained some doubts as to the value and wisdom of welfare work as she was carrying it on. The idea was so unusual to him that it was news, even if not the kind that could be put into a paper. Perhaps it is only natural that the people who are doing the work think it is altogether fine and worth while. Otherwise, they would get out of it. Certainly the fairly large number of men and women in various phases of welfare and community work who are known to the writer are almost without exception earnest, serious, and very much convinced that they are doing a valuable social service. The general head of one of the more elaborate schemes is sure that the plan of operations in his group of mills is at present quite satisfactory and

that any changes must be very gradual. But there is not complete unanimity even in this group, for the head of another large scheme confesses to a feeling of doubt whether the present system does any good. He wonders whether we will not have to change its whole basis and get away from mill control and mill initiation of welfare and community activities.

This last opinion is unusual. But it is perhaps significant of a new spirit among welfare workers. The writer has been struck by a change of tone in the meetings of the Southern Textile Social Service Association. Some years ago it was, "What can we do for our people?" In 1926 the presidential address struck the note that continued through the meetings: "How can we so train our people that they will not only be able, but will want, to do things for themselves?" This idea of training for leadership is new in the mill village. It should be of far-reaching significance.

OPINIONS OF EMPLOYEES

If the method of securing the information for this study was ill-adapted to learning the opinions of many welfare workers it was even more poorly adapted to finding out the attitudes of the employees. There were, however, several opportunities of securing presumably *bona fide* opinions. Added to these are impressions collected by the writer during several years of work in the mill and mill village. Altogether these data may warrant at least a few intimations as to how the employee feels about welfare work and extra-mill activities.

Opinions and attitudes vary greatly among the operatives. This may be because they are the product of different minds and personalities; it is more probably so because they grow out of diverse experiences with mills. Thus a woman whose work in the mills of North Carolina dates back to the Civil War declared that the mills in those days "did nothing for their people—didn't care whether they lived or died. Not like it is now when they send their help to the hospital or lend money for the funeral if somebody dies," she added approvingly. Another of equal age and experience remembers with approval many occasions when the owners of the little mills helped her family and her neighbors. She thinks they did more

for the workers personally then because the mills were smaller and the owners knew everybody. "I reckon this welfare work now-a-days is all right for the young folks." But it was obvious that her latter experience had not included much contact with it.

In like fashion, a middle-aged couple told of the interest of a mill owner in his employees and village thirty years ago. "The present owners don't live here and that is one reason they are not interested in the people. They don't do anything they don't have to do, and what they have to do is about covered by taxes. They are not interested in much but grinding out the money now. Lots of the people own their homes and the mill owners know that they are here to stay and think they don't have to make the place attractive." Four miles away in another village another couple of about the same age told with some complacency about the personal work of successive owners. "The X family who started the mill were mighty fine people. They lived in the village and Mrs. X visited among the people a lot. I couldn't tell you the many times she has been to my house—especially when anybody was sick she was always coming in with things for them to eat, and the like. The next owner lived here too and his family were nice to the people. The present owner lived out here a year or so and then moved back to town. But they are friendly, clever people too."

The writer knows a mill foreman, an intelligent, thoughtful man, who honestly feels, and who says the workers feel, that most of the money spent on welfare is wasted, that it would far better be put into wages. "Most welfare workers are just kidding themselves and the management along." On the other hand, another equally thoughtful and intelligent foreman firmly believes in welfare work. He does not consider that it is done in lieu of paying higher wages. He says he has very seldom heard such a comment made by operatives, though he believes it would be, if the welfare work were carried on extravagantly. He doubts whether half the people in any village ever take advantage of the opportunities offered. This is due partly to lack of understanding of the value of the work: "they have never had it attractively sold to them—don't know what it is all about." It is due partly to the fact that "the

welfare workers themselves have not found out just what they want to do and how to do it. If the welfare workers don't know what they are driving at it is not surprising that the people don't. This will improve as we get more experienced and better-trained welfare workers."

Opinions as diverse as these can no doubt be duplicated in almost every village. There is the woman who rejects all invitations to take part in the community group: "I reckon I know as much about cooking and raising babies as that old maid." There is the family who considers that it has been neglected if the community worker does not come every day to see the new baby. There is the family that will not take a part in the modest activities of the village they now live in because a former one had so much better community work. There is the family that does missionary work in the new home by starting a club or asking the mill for a reading room because they miss the advantages enjoyed in the last home. Most numerous of all, there is the village group who have no opinion of welfare work because they know nothing about it and take no part in it even if it is going on in their village. When it comes down to fundamental attitudes it takes as many sorts of people to make a cotton mill village as it does to make a world.

CHAPTER XIV

OPINIONS OF WELFARE WORK: NEIGHBORS AND OUTSIDERS

THERE ARE many persons outside mill circles who come in contact with the mill in the course of their everyday life and work. Their opinions should be of interest and at least some value, if for no other reason than to show how people close to the mill village view its problems. Teachers in schools which serve mill communities should be in a position to form opinions worth noting. On the whole, their reactions are somewhat disappointing, being either a rather colorless acceptance of prejudices and traditions or a somewhat emotional appraisal. Two classes of opinions, perhaps the most frequently encountered, illustrate what is meant. One is the statement, expressed sometimes with surprise and as often as a defense, that the speaker has found the mill children just as bright as any others and that they stand as well in their classes. The other is that they are a definitely retarded group. The appraisals of the outside activities of the mill parallel these two: one is that the mill does everything for its operatives and that they are a group almost to be envied; the other is quite the opposite. The opinions of other local citizens fall along similar lines and depend upon the kind of mill they see near by or the mill men with whom they are acquainted.

OPINIONS OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS

The superintendent of schools in a town which is about half peopled by mill workers is quite definitely of the opinion that the mill children are a retarded group. By way of contrast, the manager of a mill in the town had just a few hours before mentioned one after another of the mill children who had taken honors in various ways—in athletics, class offices, scholarship, and so on. These are not necessarily contradictory statements.

J. J. Rhyne[1] points out that as a group the children may be retarded, which results in several grades in a single school containing children approaching fourteen years of age. All through the upper elementary grades a selective process goes on, whereby those who are not doing good work become discouraged, or their families do, and they stop to take jobs in the mill, leaving the most ambitious and the brightest in school. The second point on which this superintendent's opinion differed radically from that of the mill manager was regarding the location of a school on the mill side of town. Each time where additional school facilities have been needed this question has come up, and each time the mill manager, as an influential citizen, a large taxpayer, and a member of the school board, has defeated it because he has very definite feelings against segregation of the mill children. The mill deliberately built its large new plant within town limits because of this conviction that the mill people should be a part of the town, although by building a very little further off it could have been outside. It does not now propose to pay town taxes and lose one of the chief advantages for which it pays them. To be sure, the stand of the school superintendent is not based on a desire for segregation: he says that the mill children, on the far side of the large village from the present school, have to walk about a mile; that it is too far for the small children and results in continual poor attendance on their part and on the part of all ages in bad weather. A visiting teacher, engaged for a few months' work, was of the opinion that attendance was poor solely because there had been little or no attempt to enforce the law. The latest reports from this town seem to indicate that the school principal is likely to win out and that the new elementary school will be built in the mill village, the larger children continuing to attend the central school.

This case shows a vital difference of opinion concerning schools, not based, so far as could be determined, on any prejudice against the mill people but arising from varied conceptions of expediency and convenience. An example of more deeply rooted opinion was disclosed by the remarks of a super-

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[1] *Case Studies in Mill Village Population.*

intendent of schools for a county in which the textile industry forms the basis of prosperity. He and the mill manager had spoken enthusiastically about school progress, particularly the setting up of excellent consolidated schools. The school superintendent added that while these were necessarily located near the centers of population, which in several cases in this county are country mill villages, it had been considered wise to place them a little outside—a half mile or so—rather than immediately in the mill village, because there had been some opposition on the part of other people in the district to "sending their children to school in a mill village." And yet there is apparently little feeling among the school children against those from the mills, and the latter as often as others are leaders and are prominent in student affairs. This superintendent is of the opinion that the mill children are retarded and that it is due somewhat to their moving about and to poor educational environment in the homes, but that they are as good students as any in a grade "when they get there."

Another county superintendent felt that economic conditions are back of practically all failures of mill children to continue through the upper grades. The psychological effort of a boy or girl in transferring to a town school at the sixth or seventh grade, after having lived almost exclusively among other mill children, is not, in his opinion, the barrier it once was. Through his twenty years' experience in the same county, one well dotted with mills, he has seen a great change in opinions held of both mill and country children. He thinks that consolidated schools, automobiles, and contacts in the towns are responsible for this change.

Still another county superintendent agreed that the economic causes of leaving school are far more important than the psychological effect of having to change to a town school during sensitive adolescence. He added, however, that "the teachers and school management try to discourage anything that would call attention to the fact that some are mill children and some are not. We want to minimize such distinctions." The natural conclusion is that distinctions do exist among the students. A domestic science teacher in a large high school said that "some of the mill girls in her classes are as bright as the rest," but added that she does not teach the

brightest and best students in school, since most of these, especially from the well-to-do homes, are taking the college preparatory course. When she was asked whether the nature of home environment was not clearly evidenced in such courses as domestic science, she agreed that it might partly account for the mill girls' backwardness, but insisted that she did not think they were quite up to the average in mental ability itself.

OFFICERS OF WELFARE AND SOCIAL AGENCIES

The opinions of persons in school work naturally refer to school standing, social and mental, and to problems of isolation growing out of separate schools. The experiences of other workers touch on different points. For instance, a woman who has done, in the following order, industrial Y.W.C.A. work, general mill community work, and home demonstration work among country girls, said that the girls of the last group, whom she has in her clubs now, are of a higher type than those she used to meet in mill or other industrial club work, "They have had better advantages." "Higher type" is too general a term to be of much value, though one understands about what she means by it. The only difficulty with this piece of testimony is that the woman was not speaking of comparable social and economic classes. She now teaches daughters of fairly comfortable farmers, who have leisure, means of transportation to club meetings, and an interest in social and domestic arts as perhaps their main occupation. A group of the daughters of tenant and small farmers would furnish a fairer comparison.

First and last, through interviews at their offices, informal friendly visits and conversations, and expressions of opinions at meetings, the writer secured the opinion of about a hundred workers in different sorts of public and semi-public agencies: Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. secretaries, county welfare officers, doctors, nurses, and other workers. While these opinions are too varied to be classified and too lengthy to be given in detail, a few may perhaps be of interest. A nurse considered it a matter of course that most of the cases with which she had to deal should be among the mill employees and their families: they make up a large portion of the population of her county;

they are largely poorer people and have few resources for sickness and other difficulties; they include among the newcomers shiftless families who have to have assistance. She said that she had always found the mills willing to help her and them. " 'We take care of our people,' is their formula," she said, and her conversation and the cases she cited implied that they live up to it. In a large group of public welfare officers, among whom relations with mill villages and managements were a topic of lengthy discussion, one could not but be struck with the good feeling that welfare officers have toward the mill owners. One after another testified, with approval from the group as a whole, citing cases to prove their contentions, that they have found the mill owners and managers generous, broad-minded, thoroughly helpful, willing to coöperate with the public workers, and glad to call on them for aid. Only from one or two was there a suggestion that the mill owner might want to control his village or that he did not exercise the very best of influences. One of those who put forth this opinion worked in a county that had no mills, so that he probably was talking from hearsay and not from experience. In a discussion of the sale of homes to employees a mill welfare worker who was present told of several mills that had had to buy back houses at greatly advanced prices, or had been unable to buy them back, in an effort to get rid of undesirables. At this point several public workers spoke sympathetically of instances they knew of undesirables living, and even owning houses, on the edges of mill villages, who therefore could not be removed even though they proved a bad influence on the community. The sentiment of the group, though favoring home ownership, was decidedly in favor of such measures of control as the housing system permits and takes for granted.

In another group a city social case worker declared that the management of mills in the suburbs of her city refused to allow her to work in their villages, giving as an excuse that they had welfare workers to take care of all their operatives. And though she vigorously disapproved the attitude because it favored segregation and permitted treatment and adjustment only in terms of the mill village and mill work, she admitted nevertheless that "they do take care of their cases." A similar opinion is often to be found in the ranks of

the Y.W.C.A. workers. One young secretary, who had been unusually successful in securing the coöperation and financial support of the mills and the interest of the girls, expressed the highest regard for the fine spirit she found among management and workers. But she was careful to add that the great advantage in having recreation and other community work done by the Y.W.C.A. was that it allowed more freedom and opportunity for self-expression than when it was conducted by a company-employed worker.

Diametrically opposite views are often held by these outside workers in mill villages. Thus the secretary of a Y.M.C.A. in a small textile city says that his chief problem is to get the people of the town and village to mix better. The non-industrial people make up a class who hold somewhat aloof, though he feels that this line of cleavage is more the fault of the mill people than of those of the town. He thinks that though the "town people" consider themselves better, they would mingle if met halfway. The situation is further complicated by the fact that every mill constitutes a little circle in itself and that these circles will not mix. Recently a club made up mostly of boys from one mill was almost wrecked because certain boys from a mill which the others looked down upon wanted to join. This secretary considers that the main work of the Y.M.C.A. is to break down these small cliques and the larger barriers between townspeople and mill people. This branch of the association is mainly supported by the mills of the town. Just the reverse in every respect is the opinion of a church welfare worker in another town in which about half the population are mill people. The management here has believed in making the village a part of the town in every possible respect. The welfare worker is employed by one of the churches of the town to do community work and friendly visiting, and to undertake all possible religious activities. Her church probably considers its expenditure as home missionary work; certainly she considers herself almost as much a missionary now as when she was in the foreign field. She wants churches and Sunday schools developed in the village for village people and even wants an elementary school of the town system to be placed in the main mill section. Her reason for the latter is that the mill children have a long distance to go

to school and that the parents object because they have to pay someone in the village who has a car to take their children and the neighbors' to school in stormy weather. She would like to have village churches built in order that more people may attend, as they would do, even though less vitally interested, if the church and Sunday school were nearer. Certainly, there is something to be said for her point of view, and a great deal, if one is deeply concerned with the church as a necessary instrument for social, to say nothing of personal, salvation. And certainly also one of the easiest and surest approaches to the mill people is through the church or some form of religious work. This woman remarked with the same sort of regret to be found among citizens of mill towns that "the mill has never done much for its people."

OPINIONS OF CITIZENS

It is about these general matters of "doing things for the people" by means of welfare and community work that the average citizen has an opinion. The writer tried to get some expression from many such average citizens; she tried also to get the opinions of the better educated, more thoughtful people whenever possible. The most common opinion was that just stated or the reverse; that the mill does nothing for its people and that this makes it something of a blot on the town's good name; or that it does everything for them which might be proclaimed by the boosters of the most progressive town. One church worker and club woman said she understood that the "new mill is very nice but things are very bad at the old mill"; that the head man is interested in getting every cent of money he can with no interest in bettering the conditions of his workers, so that "there is always somebody asking help from other residents of the town for a family in that village." One gathers that this is regarded as a sort of disgrace, since it keeps the citizens from being able to say that there is no poverty in the town, and embarrasses them in their newly adopted boosting.

A home-keeping woman who has lived most of her life in towns having many cotton mills but who has had few relations with the mill says: "There is something pitiful about a cotton mill village to me—the suggestion of monotony, and the sad,

dull, uninterested appearance of the people. They do not look as if they enjoy life,—won't even have flowers to brighten up their weedy yards. They sit on the porch or in the yard, listless and depressing to look at. They are so much more pitiful than a village of Negroes; they don't seem to know how to enjoy life as Negroes do. And Negroes will always have some flowers around no matter how poor the soil or how poverty-stricken the family." A business woman in still another town knows little about the tiny cotton mill in its suburbs. She and all the townspeople dismiss the little village from their calculations except when they want to give statistics on the variety of the town's industries. It is altogether isolated physically, educationally, and psychologically. She added that "the new hosiery mill downtown" has been a fine thing for the whole community, since many girls who had never had a chance to work are now provided with acceptable employment. She mentioned several families who had taken a new lease on life, built modest little homes, or become independent and self-respecting because the daughters had been provided with work there.

Town pride can be affected otherwise than by conditions in the mill village or relation between employer and employees. Citizens of towns that have many mills in the suburbs, after referring to the population of the town proper, usually add the explanation that it is twice or thrice as large if one includes the mill villages, "which are really a part of the town." In Greensboro there was considerable feeling and political manoeuvering with much publicity in the newspapers, pro and con, over taking in the surrounding villages before it was finally done. Rockingham went through a similar discussion during the meeting of the legislature of 1927. Many towns with a relatively smaller textile industry feel the matter keenly. Reference was made in an earlier chapter to the popular, influential head of a mill who is able to keep the mill and village outside the incorporate limits of the adjoining town. A prominent citizen and member of the school board of a small but rapidly growing town sees danger of a rift in the town solidarity because of a new little mill. Although it has only five or six houses and employs only thirty or forty people as yet, and does no welfare work at all, there are distressing evidences

that the area surrounding it is developing into a section apart. If the mill succeeds and enlarges, a church will have to be built there, an absurd thing in so small a town, but the mill people will not come to the town churches. The town members visit them and invite them, and when occasional operatives do come "fall all over themselves, shaking hands and welcoming them to make them feel at home, but they seldom come back."

A citizen of a two-industry town, a thoughtful man who has observed his town and has been one of its leading citizens for thirty years, tried to analyze the causes for the segregation which he had seen. X had furniture factories before it had cotton mills, and it was never necessary to have separate schools and churches for the earlier workers, nor did they live in clearly defined sections of their own, though of course they were grouped, as any wage-earning class would be, somewhat together and apart from the business, salaried, and professional classes. As soon as the mills came, little churches were built by two or three denominations, and one mill, a little farther away than the others, built its own little school, because the workers would not go to the regular churches and schools. Mr. —— does not think that these churches were built because the mill people were not made to feel at home elsewhere—certainly in his church and in one other he knows they were treated in the same way as other people. Some of the main workers in both these churches and their Sunday schools are furniture factory people. The consensus of opinion in the town seems to be that the cotton mill has an effect on its workers that the furniture factory does not have. This man thinks there are several reasons. The people of a single mill all live huddled together while the furniture factory workers are mixed up with other citizens and with workers in other factories. Secondly, a large number of the furniture workers own their homes and move about less, two facts which make them more interested in the normal life of the town. Thirdly, the head of the family makes enough to support the family without the help of the women and children.[2] This citizen's

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[2]Incidentally, this is a favorite argument of the furniture industry. On the other hand, managers of textile mills located in furniture towns almost invariably make favorable comparisons between their wages and

daughter, a church and club worker, said that before the cotton mills came to X there were very few empty stockings to be filled at Christmas and that there were many more since their arrival. The town nurse, whom all the industries of X join in supporting, says that fully half her work is in the largest of the mill villages, although it contains only a small proportion of the industrial workers of the town. She feels that this mill ought to employ a nurse of its own.

Thus opinion ranges from resentment at a division of the community, all the way to the assumption that the mill sections are separate communities. One citizen, typical of many, said with a shade of pride and satisfaction that "we [the leading denominations of the town] have churches in all of them—started them, help support them, do relief work and religious visiting," all in a decidedly missionary spirit.

OPINIONS OF NON-SOUTHERNERS

Owing to the recent interest in the South and particularly in its textile industry, temporary residents, and even casual visitors from other sections, often make a point of seeing the mills and mill villages about which there is, and has been, so much conflict of opinion. Another type of outsider, whose opinion is of more interest, is the mature student of economics, of labor and industry, and of social conditions, who comes from other parts of the United States and from other countries. While the opinions of all these are often based on more

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those of the furniture workers. One of the leading furniture manufacturers of the state, to whom the writer was referred as being able and willing, to give data on wages, said that the average in his plant (1926) was forty cents an hour ($22 a week) while for the town as a whole it was close to thirty-five cents an hour ($19.25 a week). Mills in furniture towns claimed, and in several instances showed pay-rolls to prove, that they had many workers making over $20 a week, thus competing with the furniture workers in wages. The very fact that there are so many hosiery mills, employing girls and women in all the furniture towns of the state seems to refute the argument that the furniture factories pay enough to enable the head of the family to support it. The fact that the furniture factory does not employ the mother or daughter does not mean that she is not employed. Hosiery mills in such towns invariably say that their employees are the wives and daughters of the furniture workers.

or less superficial observation, at least they are the opinions which have been oftenest reflected in the public press. They have probably been powerful beyond their value in molding the general attitude of the country in regard to Southern conditions. Hence, the impressions of a few different types of such outsiders may well be mentioned.

A woman from the Middle West and a man from New England who had had some opportunity of observing mill villages, at least in outward appearance, said that the villages appeared to them to be fully as good as the other less prosperous parts of the towns, and considerably better than all but the best rural homes, though not a great deal to boast of at that! Almost every foreign visitor who was questioned made some comment on the slovenliness and the lack of flowers and lawns at many if not most homes. When their attention was called to the comparison suggested above they decided that it was the custom of the country, or at least of the South, to be rather careless of the surroundings of the homes. Accustomed to seeing every bit of ground cultivated, these European visitors remarked on this appearance and the apparent thriftlessness that it denoted. Each one said that the houses themselves are as good as those of wage-earners in his or her own country. Each pointed out the advantages of garden plots and of light and air in abundance, a factor taken for granted by Southern critics. On the other hand, the one great criticism made by Southerners was never made by visitors from other parts of the United States or foreign countries, namely, the monotony of the houses. That they assumed to be unavoidable.

It is all but impossible to find a person who can approach a mill village or a mill problem without some preconceptions. As a result of the long, heated, and widespread discussions of the horrors or delights of mill life there is hardly an intelligent person who has not read or heard a vivid description of one side or the other, and been influenced accordingly. For example, a French student of labor problems and labor conditions in the United States was surprised to find good working conditions in the Southern mills. Except at certain specified plants he had found poorer conditions in the North, where he had first studied the textile industry. He had been told there

that he would find things much worse in the South, and so "what can we do? We have to compete with the South, and conditions are very bad there." He went through many mills in this section, some good, some average, and some poor, and was struck by the roominess and pleasant working conditions, and by the fact that the work was done in much more leisurely fashion. He was, however, thoroughly convinced that the operatives had a weary, drawn appearance which he had not seen in other workers in the United States. Whether this was a racial characteristic or the result of long hours he, of course, could not say.

One of the few visitors who appear to have come to this country without preconceived notions was Mr. D. B. Copland, professor of economics at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Coming from a country with such a strong trade-union tradition he was amazed at the amount of control which the Southern mill owner has consciously or unconsciously built up and at the many ways in which it can be made effective simply through his position as employer, landlord, philanthropist, and general mentor. He referred to companies of Australia that are doing the same kind of welfare work that is going on in the mill villages here, but with the great difference that it is there managed by a joint committee, although the company furnishes the main financial support. If the possibilities of control struck the Australian it was quite a different thing which impressed a student of labor and industry from Germany. He considers that our peaceful relations between employer and employee and our lack of unions are due to the fact that men in the ranks may and do so constantly rise not only to the lower supervisory jobs but to the highest executive positions as well. This prevents the creation of a cotton mill class with a consciousness of its low status and with hopes opposed to those of the owners, and instead turns the ambitions of the ablest operative toward the same goals as the managers hold before themselves.

Another visitor, an Englishwoman with years of experience in industry and in the British Labor Office, was most impressed by the fact not only that the workers pay very low rents, but that they are allowed to live in the houses rent free when the mill closes down. Fresh from years of depression, especially

in textiles, she had often heard the cry: "If we can just keep a roof over our heads we will manage some way." She was not critical of other implications of the housing system which strike most observers so forcibly; she could see little but good in a system that solved what she considered the most difficult problem which the English experiments with unemployment insurance have had to face.

A review of opinion as expressed in the newspapers, in magazines, and in books would constitute a study in itself. The literature describing, praising, criticizing, analyzing, interpreting the mills and their economic and social significance is already large and seems to increase in volume with the years. Such a review cannot be undertaken here for several reasons: it would be too long; it would be a summary not of first-hand information, such as this study professes to be, but of material available elsewhere in one form or another; and finally, it would probably add little except in detail to the samples already mentioned. A survey of mills and mill villages will, it is true, bring to light new facts and new developments as long as there is an additional mill to be found, because each develops its program and its policy out of its own needs and even more out of the personalities of its management and welfare workers. Nevertheless, a small random selection of mills soon discovers the different sorts of general policy: paternalism or a striving toward democracy and self-expression; control and supervision or *laissez faire* and lack of interest; isolation or efforts toward mingling with the surrounding community. In the same way a study of opinion, though always productive of new side lights and new reactions, soon shows that almost everyone assumes an attitude of approval or disapproval of mill village life. Controversy on the subject has been of too long standing and perennial warmth to leave many persons noncommittal.

CHAPTER XV

COMMUNITY VIEWPOINTS

PERHAPS ENOUGH has already been said about the opinion of various outsiders regarding the mill village problem in general and its welfare work in particular. The writer, however, chanced to have access to a large number of community studies or analyses of towns which include or adjoin mill villages. These descriptions, which it may be of value to quote in part here, were written by persons who have had more than ordinary opportunity for observation, and most of whom have had some training in social and community outlook. The circumstances under which the studies were written were such as to encourage a frank truthful expression of opinion according to the lights of the writers. If they show prejudice against or partiality to the mills they are no different from other observers. At all events they reflect the opinion of a large body of people close to, but not of, the mill group.

The extracts from these papers touch upon many subjects of community interest: type of people, isolation and segregation, class consciousness, social relations, and mill welfare work. While all the material presented here does not bear directly upon the welfare work of the mills, most of it does touch, at least indirectly, questions connected with such outside activities as have been discussed in earlier chapters of this study. Because every study treats of a different combination of problems it would have been possible to group the latter topically only by separating comments on different phases of a given community. To do this, however, would have been to miss the larger aspect of the community. What the extracts thus lose from lack of orderliness they gain, it is hoped, in vividness. Altogether they give a striking, if incomplete, picture of the problems of the mill village, especially in its relation to the surrounding community, as they are seen by interested and intelligent—and frank—observers who have had occasion to meet some of the problems in their everyday

life and work, and in turn to mold public opinion. A few slight changes have been made in the wording of these extracts for the sake of anonymity or greater clearness.

EXTRACTS FROM CASE STUDIES OF COMMUNITY LIFE

A

(Written by a Teacher)

A, like every other manufacturing town, has within its limits conditions of all kinds. Some are good, some are bad, others are indifferent. A's problems are many and difficult because its life has become that of a complex industrial society. Here are child labor problems, unskilled and illiterate workers, employment of whole families, dreary homes and inefficient housekeeping, expensive and injurious dietary, feeble physiques, early marriages, premature and uncared-for old age, arrested mental development, nomadism, poverty and crime, and entire villages owned and controlled by corporations. But the town has a great future to be developed through the initiative and vision of its industrial leaders, social workers, teachers, and preachers. . . .

This old lingering prejudice against "poor whites" still exists with the people of "Central A." If we subtract the employees of the mills and the school children, we find the population of Central A rather small. But no coöperation can be achieved between the classes. The Central group had rather do *for* the mill group than do *with* them. Even in the organizations of young people, such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, you can accomplish nothing except carry out the plan of the Central group. The troops of boys and girls always have to go to "Central" for a rally or for a special business meeting. Sometimes the facilities of a mill community house offer greater advantages for some special meetings, but the conservative idea of the young people as it has been handed down from their parents prevents any coöperation.

Another reason for the separation of the people in these classes is the fact that each corporation or mill owner that owns a village provides for the welfare of that community. So far as it is possible each mill has its own school building, its own churches, community houses, playgrounds, and resident

social workers. This tends to increase the pride of the people in their community, and it is easy enough to inaugurate some movement to include only that particular village. We find that physical boundaries are not the only dividing lines between the various villages or communities in A.

Lack of education is another weakness of the entire population of A. The high rate of illiteracy in the population has been considerably reduced during the past few years, but the general level of education has not been raised to any appreciable degree. With an enrollment of 1,000 pupils in one school, there was a seventh grade of eighteen pupils last year. Probably twelve of these will go to high school next year. This is typical of the other four elementary schools. In a class graduating from the high school there are usually two to three boys and girls from the mill communities. Unfortunately we find that the elementary schools are not training these boys and girls for the world's work. Lack of proper room and equipment is the big handicap. The child of the mill worker fulfills his destiny and falls into the ranks of the slightly educated, unskilled, retarded laborers of the cotton industry. . . .

One might expect the industrial leaders to dominate politically, but the very dominance seems to grow out of the close relations between employer and employee.

B

(Written by a School Principal)

B is the largest town in the county, with a population of two distinct classes: the factory population which is by far the larger, and the town people who think they are far superior to the factory class. . . .

Among the many mills there are two companies who own the wealth of the town. For a long time these two mills were working against each other. When one of them would start anything for the betterment of its workers the other would try to discount it, sometimes by trying to do something better and at other times by criticizing its rival's work.

This antagonistic attitude continued to grow until some of the older owners of the companies died out and left the work of the two companies in the hands of the younger generation. For eight or ten years these two companies have been working

together in perfect harmony. There is no factory town in the South that has any better homes for its workers than B. Just north of the town there is a park owned and controlled by the mill companies. It offers all kinds of advantages of play for the children of the workers all through the day until late in the evening. They have apparatus such as is seen on any city school playgrounds. There is a skating rink which is open to the workers of the mills several nights a week. This park is beautifully located, and the shrubbery and lawn are wonderful.

Each company puts on a contest and offers prizes every summer for the family that makes the most progress in beautifying its yard and for the family that keeps the best yard all the summer. This has been a big help and has caused the yards of these homes to be kept in excellent condition. For the past eight years these companies have hired a band master all the year around to teach the boys who work in the mill or the sons of mill workers, the companies furnishing the instruments and the uniforms and paying the instructor. At the present time they have one hundred boys in the band, all with good instruments and beautiful uniforms. This band is known all over the state and in other states as one of the best bands of its kind in the South. It won high honors last fall in a large band competition.

The six schools in the town afford ample opportunity for every child who desires to get an education. The city school is open to anybody in the town until he has finished high school; however, the children in the mill sections cannot attend the school "up town" if they have not finished the grade work. Here is one point upon which there is now better spirit between the town people and the mill people than there was several years ago. Five years ago the town people would not allow the children to come from the mill sections to the high school without paying tuition, but now they have opened the doors of the high school, tuition free, to every child in town who is ready to enter high school.

Every summer these mills hire a baseball team to play there for about ten weeks so that the mill people may have the opportunity to watch the games. Generally there are two or three boys from the mills playing on this ball team and it adds much to the interest in the teams to see some of the boys from home

playing ball with players from all over the country. The mills spent $10,000 last summer for a baseball park, and it is a beauty. . . .

The churches in the mill sections do not coöperate with the churches "up town." It is a rare thing to see any of the mill people except owners and men in the higher positions attending church services with the town people.

C

(Written by a Teacher)

C is a suburban village located near X. . . . The "lower class" of X corresponds pretty closely to the "higher class" of C. . . . The population of C is divided. About 25 per cent are mill workers. The remaining are known as the "better class." The latter usually have positions in X as telephone girls, ten-cent store girls, motormen, truck drivers, delivery boys, carpenters, and mail carriers. About 90 per cent of the motormen, telephone girls, and ten-cent store girls in X are from C. As soon as the "better class" becomes financially able they usually move either to Y, another suburb, or to some undeveloped section of X where rents are not so high. It is considered a "step forward" to move to Y, although this is also a mill section. But in Y there is a third division of population made up of educated people surrounding a school. The standards of living are higher. It is a promotion to live in Y.

The mill workers in C are known as the "lower class." They appear satisfied. This satisfaction is due mainly to the strong personality of the mill manager. He is the friend of his workers. He is "one of them." He himself was at one time a worker in the mill that he now manages. He has made good. (Are there not many more who could make good if they only had a chance?) The mill superintendent knows his workers; the workers know the superintendent. There is a strong tie of kindred feeling existing. The manager is the superintendent of the Sunday school, he is a member of the lodges, he is chairman of the school board and owner of the dairy in C. He is met in many walks of life. He is the main pulse of the community itself. The people look to him for the solution of their problems. (This accounts for the lack of enthusiasm in the

present incorporation agitation.) He is generous and charitable. He gives money, time, and self to betterment of all community activities. This leading man dominates and satisfies his workers. They are really contented. They know no better. They are content to travel in the paths of their fathers.

The families of this lower class are usually large. Wages paid by the factories and mills would be sufficient for a small family but are too low to maintain families of half a dozen children or more. Children attend school until fourteen years of age because they have to. They really do not want the opportunity. At the age of fourteen they begin work in the mills. It is an absolute necessity, for their pay goes to support the remaining dependents of the large family. This is not the desire of the parents only; the children feel obligated to care for younger ones of the family and really want to make money. The school attendance law, however, is strictly enforced in C. The mills do not want children under fourteen and go through a formal procedure before hiring children.

Children working in the mills in order to help their homes and families have caused undue and unfavorable criticisms of the community at large. These girls have a natural desire for beautiful clothes and trinkets, and since their wages go mainly to the support of the families, little or nothing is left with which to purchase these "luxuries." Many of these girls have done questionable things to receive these prizes. Boys, likewise, have been brought up before the juvenile court for offenses due to their parents' neglect. The many women who work in the mills do not have anyone to look after their children in the afternoons when school is out. It follows that bad habits are formed.

Another means of bringing about contentment among the mill people is allowing women who are unable to attend the mill, because of ill health or the care of a *young* baby, to do work on loopers at home. Looping is a means by which such women may add money to the family budget. Better living conditions are thus realized. A great number of C people, the other members of whose families work outside the mills and the community, do this home looping. Street car motormen's wives add to their weekly allowance in this way with satisfactory results. These non-mill workers are allowed to use the

swimming pool, which was built exclusively for the mill workers. The children of these families also are allowed free access to the park, which has playground equipment. Again contentment in the community is being strengthened.

Each mill has an organized ball team. Contest games are staged which tend to increase community pride and satisfaction in local organizations.

The school is the community center. It is now being used by the Baptists as a church until their new building is completed. The school building is used the year 'round as the meeting place for the Woman's Club. Holiday programs, club meetings, and class socials are held in this common center, the school.

The Parent-Teacher Association has monthly meetings at the school. There is very little interest shown in these meetings. The attendance is small. The teachers are always all present, and from a half a dozen to a dozen parents. It is hard to get anyone in the community for president. Most of the people are too busy to visit the school for these meetings. A great number are working in mills and a still greater number are looping at home. They do not feel that they can afford to take the time to go to a meeting. Besides, they feel so inferior to the teachers. There seems to be a division here. If the teachers sit on one side of the hall the parents choose the opposite. The teachers have noticed this and even though they try to prevent it the tendency of the community people is to sit away from the teachers.

What has been said about the Parent-Teacher Association can justly be said of the Woman's Club. Few members show any interest.

The mill manager is directly behind all movements toward progress in the community. He personally donates large sums of money in aid of them. I believe, however, that he knows the children will come to his mill at the age of fourteen. The school itself is attractive. Modern subjects such as physical training, domestic science, art, music, etc., are taught along with the other required subjects. Money, however, is uppermost in the children's minds, and the necessity of having to help support the family is the reason for their non-attendance. They cannot afford to wait for the better salaries that are offered

to the more skilled men or women. They, therefore, content themselves with doing what their fathers have done before them. A school law is needed to keep them in school up to twenty-one years of age. Education will solve the problem.

The people who work outside the community do not hold high positions. Their positions, however, are a step forward. This class is chiefly made up of telephone girls, motormen, truck drivers, etc. The stores of C are usually run by men of the community who are self-made. The cashier of the bank, an educated man, lives in X. The two doctors, who are well educated, stay in the community as a matter of policy.

C has a lower standard of living than the mill section of Y. The mill authorities of Y realize that their workers, living so near the residence section of the better class, are liable to become dissatisfied with living conditions, etc.; so a community house is carefully guarding the recreational activities of these people with the hope of keeping them contented.

C does not have this influence of an educated class to deal with. There seem to be no forces that are encouraging disloyalty to the mills on the part of the workers. They are content with their conditions. They know no better. C as yet does not feel that the Community House is necessary. There is no element in the community that calls for the best in social life.

There has been a great deal of talk concerning the incorporation of C. The city of X wants to extend its boundaries to include several suburbs. The C people at large do not wish to become a part of X. There are several reasons for this. The mill people, as usual, look to the mill manager to solve their problems. This problem (incorporation) is practically settled by the mill manager. They accept his judgment as right. He has always "looked after them." The mill authorities do not want to be incorporated. It would mean much heavier taxes for them. The company owns almost all the homes in which the mill workers live. Incorporation would mean an added expense of many thousands of dollars to the mill. Consequently, the mill owner exerts his influence over his workers in opposition to the extension bill of X. Practically all the mill workers are bitterly opposed to this movement, mainly or wholly because of the mill manager's influence. Here the paternal system is seen in action.

Most of the other people of C oppose the city extension bill as they object to city taxes on their own account. They know that they can stay outside the city and live more cheaply. They have easy access to the city. A street car line runs through the community. The people can get into the city in a few minutes. They make use of the stores and other facilities. Then they return to live on a low standard—that is, without modern conveniences. They have a scanty water supply for drinking purposes. They do not have sewer connections, except at the school building. It is a hard matter to get sufficient water there. The people have no fire department; for they have no water. In case of a fire, the only help comes from the neighbors. Water is carried in buckets and dashed upon a burning building, until news reaches X and aid from the outside is secured. Last winter, a fire started in an empty house and resulted in the total loss of four of the best homes. There is no mail delivery in C. After each train arrives, a number of villagers may be seen going to the post office for mail. The people do not see a need for these "unnecessary" things. They know they will have to pay for them if they join X, so they want to stay out. They want to live cheaply. This same set of people seem to think that X is "putting something over on them." Why does X so desire their entrance into the city? They believe that a selfish spirit prompts the offer. They believe X wants to add more to her population, thereby being able to borrow more money with which the central parts of the city may be developed. They do not see anything in sight for them as yet. They point to another mill section which has been included in the city for twenty-five or thirty years and not until last year was able to get a paved street. I believe the people will be more willing to come into the city when the city is able to provide what they consider definite advantages. The people do not regard a water and fire department as great improvements. They want an increase in friendly feeling toward themselves. The mill people think that X looks down on their section and thinks them inferior. This they resent. They do not understand that X is trying to better their conditions in order to remove that feeling.

There is a small portion of the population who really want to become a part of X. These are chiefly men who are seeking

public office. Such a man realizes that X is all-powerful and will in due time take in C. He wants to stand on the winning side. He wants to gain the votes of those people who are in X now but soon will have a voice in running C.

The Methodist Church, at which the mill manager is Sunday school superintendent, usually runs smoothly. There are no factions. The preacher is chosen largely by the superintendent's wishes. The people accept everything as "right." The entire membership is made up of mill workers and their families.

The Baptist Church is almost always in a muddle. If the trouble is not in the choir, then it must be somewhere in the membership. The members are partly mill workers, but mainly the better class. A new church is now under way which has caused a split in the congregation. Some people wanted the main entrance to face the M Road; some wanted it to face N St.; and still others wanted a corner entrance. Hard feelings still linger from this disagreeable affair. It was decided to have the entrance from M Road, and consequently many families are not on speaking terms.

There is another religious sect in C. They are called Holy Jumpers, I believe. They are very few and represent the most ignorant class. They meet in homes of believers of that faith.

I was talking yesterday with a leading man of C. I asked him how many police were in the community. He said there was a deputy sheriff and a constable placed there by the county. Their work, however, is not in C alone but over the county. This citizen told me that C did not need a policeman as there was little lawlessness there. Evidently the lawbreakers go into the city or to surrounding places to commit offenses. Perhaps, however, there is more crime than is supposed in this community, since no records are kept. It may be a breeding place for lawbreakers. Police should be there to *prevent* offenses.

There is no centralized social relief work in C. Each church and lodge does extensive charity work without knowledge of what the others are doing.

C[1]

(Written by a Teacher)

The mills of C and Y are run by a man outstanding in the business world as a Christian leader. He has deep sympathies in his church work and other humanitarian interests. He has erected a settlement house in Y which is doing splendid work. No boys frequenting it at night have ever been in court.

Yet the spirit of paternalism is not altogether out of the system. At C the voice of the mill superintendent is heard over the voice of the people in school matters, his influence is seen in the Junior Order, and in the exodus of half the teachers. A petition was made for his removal from the school board but he would not be removed. At a meeting in the school building to discuss city extension, he was quoted as saying the building should not be used for that purpose. When the county superintendent gave his consent and the people assembled, the building was locked. They pushed a boy through the window, and thus the door was opened. Then it was found that the fuses were all out (accidentally). There happened to be an electrician in the crowd who repaired the lights, and the meeting was carried on with more fervor than ever. The superintendent will have to pay his city taxes soon, I think, in spite of his protests.

C

(Written by a Worker)

Some of the manufacturers have community houses where they do a kind of welfare work for their employees, but for employees only. It would be foolish to expect a mill owner to run a public place; he couldn't afford it of course; but nevertheless an employee might have a dear friend whom he would want to take to the park or reading room, or to go swimming with, and because his friend was employed by another company they couldn't go together. The possibilities are in such a case that they would seek some other less wholesome recreation where they could be together.

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[1]There were several descriptions of the same community; in certain details they show considerable difference.

C

(Written by a Citizen)

One of the principal reasons why these suburbs have not been incorporated into X is because of the selfish interests of the influential manufacturing class. This class have their factories and plants in the suburbs so as to escape city taxation. If the suburbs should be taken into the city their factories and plants would no longer be immune from regular city taxation. This influential manufacturing class is therefore highly opposed to city extension. The suburban people, being uneducated, are easily frightened by the taxation scare which the factory owners put up for entirely selfish motives. This opposition acts as an impediment to city progress.

D

(Written by a Citizen)

Our little town is almost surrounded by cotton mills and villages. Only a few villages had anything to say about the recent conflict over location of the school, as it was a matter of indifference to most of them. Some few own their homes and attend the main churches of the town. The majority, however, live in the houses owned by the mills. I believe I am unprejudiced in saying that we have as good a class of employees as our neighboring towns, counties, and states, and perhaps a little better than most. This is shown by the fact that the employees of our town are less mobile than those of others, and have at least a little interest in the town. The secretary of one of the new mills, a man who knows local conditions, said, "I would say that 90 to 95 per cent of our people are permanent, that is, they have been here for ten to fifteen years at mills that have been running that long. At our mill, which is practically new, we have 50 per cent that came when the mill started. As to other characteristics of the mill people, they are about like any other people. Since we have no union or labor organizations, they coöperate with the mills very well in regard to extra work." The new mill of which he spoke has been running for five years.

Now that we have an idea of the type of people they are, let us analyze their actions. Because of past personal experi-

ence with mill operatives, I want to contradict one of the characterizations of them put forward by the secretary that I quoted. He said they are like many other people; I disagree on the ground that they are less social and feel their humble position. Most of them feel that they are about as low down as they can get; so they do not maintain as high a moral standard as they should. They are not trampled under by other people, but pull themselves down and remain there through the narrowness of their minds. They would be respected if they gave other people a chance to respect them, but they will not. If a boy from up town would go out in one of the villages to see a girl his family would not be less ashamed of it than hers. They will never be emancipated as long as they keep themselves down through their own mental attitude. Their real burden is no heavier than the lint that daily settles on their clothes.

The biggest group is of course the mill workers as a whole, with the common interests of all mill employees of the town, but a smaller and stronger group is to be found in each village, while the family is the strongest of all. There is very little conflict among themselves, as a whole or in groups, and almost as little between them and the other people of the town, aside from the above-mentioned attitudes. Each village has its grocery stores but the mill families buy their dry goods at the same stores as the other people. There is a common picture show for all classes of people except the Negroes. There is one graded and high school for all, in which the employer's daughter is likely to sit behind the employee's son. A very small percentage of the employees' children attend school after they are fourteen years of age, for they can work then. Not being able to get the exact numbers I would say that around 5 or 10 per cent attend school above fourteen years of age. I base this on past observation and not on present-day facts. To sum up the cotton mill people as a whole, I would quote one observer of mill life, "they are what they are because they are where they are."

In discussing these cotton mill people I am reminded of the social work that has been attempted in my community. At present, if I am not mistaken, there is only one local community worker. She is paid by the Lutheran Church and visits all

classes of people of all denominations. She has had four years of training for this work, besides a college education. With the nature of her work I am more or less unfamiliar. Her main duty is to visit the sick and do all she can for them. In addition, the four physicians do an extended social work in rendering medical aid. They visit the poorer people and give them what medicine is required, without charge if necessary. Although we have a modern drug store the physicians dispense their own drugs, in order to be sure that the people are supplied in time of need, whether they have the money or not.

Two of the mills have community houses and for a while employed community nurses, but because of a split between two of the major owners the nurses were dismissed and others have not been secured. I do not know the exact work carried on at these community houses, but I do not think they have played a very important part in the social life since the nurses have been dismissed. To me it seems as if some nurses should be provided for these people, for I am sure they could do a great work. . . .

One of the Republican leaders is a cotton mill employee and this causes some fun to be poked at the party as a whole, but not enough to create a serious situation. . . .

The owners need to coöperate and provide a social worker for their cotton mill employees if they can't do it separately.

E

(Written by a Teacher)

The cotton mill worker is almost segregated. Only in the broader and more distant contacts do the people of the mill village and those on top of the hill come into relationship with one another. There are a mill store, a mill church, and the usual inferiority complex of the mill inhabitants.

The church situation is rather appalling. The Baptists have two churches served by two pastors. Both churches are very small and would make one reasonably large congregation. But the people in town would lose caste if they should belong to a "mill church." Wesleyan Methodists of the town are well supplied with religious facilities. Besides the First Wesleyan Methodist Church on the hill and the Second Methodist Church at the mill, the chapel of the little college is used for frequent

meetings of a religious nature. The Southern Methodists (Episcopal) have recently built a fifty thousand dollar church of very ambitious dimensions and appearance. It is sufficient to meet the needs of all the Methodists of the entire community, including the Wesleyan Methodists both on the hill and at the mill. However, the Southern Methodists have to send their pastor to preach at the mill chapel, for the mill workers do not dare to come to the "big church" to worship. Most of the preachers are of the ultra-fundamentalist type, and they tend to keep the pot of denominational unrest and bickerings boiling. . . .

The mill people have an organized baseball team in the summer time. This is almost the only type of community activity in which the town and the mill coöperate voluntarily. Of course, the mill and town children go to the same school, but they are compelled to do this by law. On the baseball team the town boys are the acknowledged leaders. The pitcher and the star players are the boys from town who have developed their aptitude to play ball in their leisure time.

Poverty is taken care of by a subscription of funds when there is any need, or else an enterprising neighbor helps out the person in distress. The mill employed a community worker who was continued until the mill struck hard times in 1920.

The mill office also pays a part of the preacher's salary. This is the case only if the preacher is willing to conduct services at the mill chapel. During the influenza epidemic in 1918-1919 the only school in the whole community was the one taught by the community workers at the mill chapel. At that time a real service was performed for the whole community.

On account of their mobility the mill people cannot organize or carry on any definite program of community work. Mobility, added to the usual poverty of the workers at the mill, effectually prevents any concerted community action. I suppose if these two difficulties were removed there would still remain the insurmountable one of efficient leadership. Acknowledged leaders are hard to find in mill villages and particularly in this one are they absent.

F

(Written by a Citizen)

On the western edge of F are two mill villages, where paternalism reigns, it is true, in its most benevolent form. The people have their cut-rate store, their community worker, their ball teams and bands, their Christmas trees with gifts for all. Their children come over to town to school, but rarely remain beyond the fifth or sixth grade. Even if they do not have to work, they realize that they don't fit in with the town children. The boys and girls come to town on Saturdays to shop and see the abominable Saturday movies. Sometimes the girls come over at night in pairs to shop, and sometimes the town boys invite them to go to ride.

In the older village there is a group of families who have been there for years, a stable dependable group, who give to the mission chapel a certain dignity. There are others who drift in and out, going from farms to the mill village and back again. There are definite social classes in these villages, with inner circles which are just as exclusive as those in town. Here, too, church life has its impress; it does not vent itself in religious factions, and it gives to hungry people contacts with one another and with town people whom they would never know otherwise.

The very eagerness of these people is in itself a grave danger to a town like F, with all its pride and condescending kindness, carried over from slavery days. The mill people and the Negroes need the best there is in F, not its charity. The social distance is great. One wonders if it can ever be lessened in F or anywhere to any appreciable extent.

G

(Written by a Teacher)

The town is rather sharply divided into three sections: the downtown and Main Street section made up of the conservative long-time residents; the uptown section made up of the workers in cotton mills and other industrial plants; and the Negro section. The mill workers' children attend the same school as those of the townsfolk. In most instances they attend the same church, but there is considerable class distinction

among the older people. At the services in one church a line of demarcation could be pretty clearly drawn down through the congregation dividing the two classes. Most of the young people's Sunday school classes are not made up of mixtures of the two groups. This class consciousness on the part of both groups has bred conservatism and aloofness. . . .

In the industrial plants there is no organization which binds employer and employee and there is no sort of organization among the employees. A welfare organization in the county sends a worker at intervals to seek out and aid the poor. . . .

G has five well-established churches of different denominations in the downtown section of the town and a few weak ones in the mill districts. There is no noticeable denominational feeling in the community. . . .

The industrial status of the community is as good as can be expected under the poor conditions of business, with half the cotton mills closed down and the others running on part time. There is an unusually low rate of mobility in G as compared with that of other towns nearby. The greater part of the mill population is stable. When the mills are doing good business the percentage of shifting mill population is greater. A good many of the mill workers, particularly those in the hosiery mills, own their homes.

H

(Written by a Teacher)

. . . The location of the mills just within the corporate town limits is another factor of disorganization. There is a distinct division between the two sections socially—condescension on the one hand and resentment of this on the other. In some manner this is being eliminated by community work in one of the mill villages; yet since this mill has its own activities, in a certain sense its people have become more sectional and coöperate less with the rest of the town.

From an economic standpoint the mills are an advantage to H, since in them it has its principal source of wealth. They have encouraged a large number of small merchants, as mill people seem to prefer them to the larger stores.

The labor turnover is large, particularly in one of the smaller mills, causing a good deal of poverty and necessitating

poor relief. This is sporadically and unsystematically rendered by the various churches, the Red Cross, and neighbors of those in need.

H has a good school system which makes use of four school buildings: the graded school, the high school, the mill community school, and the Negro school. They compare most favorably with the schools of other towns, both in scholastic work and in athletics, and have a smoothly-functioning active parent-teacher association under efficient local leadership. . . .

Because of this fact [poor recreation facilities], and also perhaps because of the lack of business opportunities, a great many young people leave town to find work. The people of the mill village, with their community house and playground, are better taken care of. . . .

A young Presbyterian pastor organized community work at the mill, as well as a federation of the churches and war activities of various kinds. Besides the Presbyterian Church, there are three other churches in the community: the Baptist, which has a large country and mill membership in addition to its town people; the Methodist, with a similar membership, but not as large; and an Apostolic Faith Mission (Holiness), drawing solely from the mill population and the country.

J

(Written by a Y.M.C.A. Worker)

The Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian denominations with two or three churches each, have their buildings located in different sections of the town in order that all areas may be served. As a result of this the mill and shop workers are separated from the more well-to-do uptown folk.

The three congregations of Baptists have never pulled together, and unless a very great change has been brought about recently they are still fearfully divided. It may be that the Baptists of South J feel that the uptown folk are rather "stuck up"; they are probably laboring under inferiority complexes. . . .

Most of J's industries, cotton mills, hosiery mills, flour mills, furniture factories, machine shops, iron and steel foundries, and tobacco factories have been established in the southern half of the town. A great deal of this outlying territory

has been incorporated in spite of much opposition. . . .

J's band is probably the more representative of both South J and the uptown section than any of the other organizations. It is under the auspices of the Merchant's Association and has contributed something at least toward developing a spirit of coöperation. . . .

Both of the large industries, the tobacco and textile concerns, do more or less substantial welfare work in behalf of their large number of employees. The hosiery mill had a very progressive system but these activities have been curtailed. . . .

K

(Written by a Citizen)

There is a cotton mill located just outside of town, which had, up to two years ago, a class of people generally regarded as being above the average of mill families. They were less mobile and had more money and personal property than most mill people possess. I think, however, this was due to the wise management of a very capable superintendent. He knew how to handle big things and was thereby able to keep his mill running while others were idle. This man was a leader of his people in various lines of athletics. He had built an enclosed athletic field on which the mill and town people took part in baseball and football. The mill and community lost a leader, a man of wisdom, who was of untold worth to the town and community, when he went to another state to accept a much larger position. Since that time the mill has not run regularly, the people have moved about a great deal, and as a result we have a much less desirable class of people.

The town people are not interested in the mill people and seldom visit their homes. No coöperation exists between them. The mill people go to their own churches.

The mill children attend school with the town children, and now there is no noticeable distinction drawn between them. I am told that a few years ago there was talk of erecting a school building at the mill for the workers' children on account of the trouble given at the town school. Although we have a less desirable class of mill people, we have about broken down the prejudice between the mill and town children. The teachers

are responsible, I think, for bringing about this change.

The mill village itself is not well kept; the homes are far below what they could be and would be if the town people were to coöperate with the villagers in bringing about better living conditions. The mill people do not seem to have any desire to improve their homes or the grounds about the houses; neither do they insist upon their children's attending school regularly, or refraining from evil devices. This is probably due to ignorance and lack of association with people who do better. There is no organization of any kind promoting welfare activities among these people. The mill owners are interested only in changes that bring about economy.

The political situation is not to be overlooked, although the Democrats are so great a majority that little excitement occurs over town or county tickets. . . . There are, however, half a dozen or more men in K who are shrewd politicians, with the political tactics of which most people are ignorant. A great deal of pressure is exerted on the mill people and on some country people during national and state campaigns by these men, who have no small amount of influence. This of course places the political machine in the hands of the few.

L

(Written by a Welfare Worker)

It is related that when many years ago a group of outsiders wanted to establish a factory at L with the intention of settling there they were turned away by the old residents, who would not consent to their beautiful little town's being marred by any "low brow" industry. . . . It was a different story when the cotton mills of L were organized by local men, but even so it was deemed best to locate the mills at a safe distance from the town proper; these mills are still beyond the town limits and for all practical purposes constitute an entirely separate community. . . .

The cleavage is probably the more pronounced since a large number of the mill workers never come into the main part of L, and correspondingly there are very few townspeople, other than the mill officials, who ever go to the mill section. The railroad station, which is located at the extreme edge of the town, actually closer to the mill section than the

town proper, is the only point used by town and mill people in common. The mill section has its own stores, churches, school, and movie house, and its people live their lives as far removed from L proper as if they were a hundred miles away. However, during the summers some of the school boys of L work in the mills without losing their standing in the town. There are also a few people living within the town limits who work intermittently in the mills; they consider themselves as belonging to L and speak of the other mill workers as "they." These few people are, however, somewhat looked down upon by the regular town residents.

L

(Written by a Citizen)

Chief among the industries of L are X and Y mills, both manufacturing cotton goods. "We are fortunate in having native labor to operate our plants," one of the officials stated by way of explanation for the harmonious spirit evident among the force in their employ.

The two mills are doing a great work among their employees through the erection of houses for them which are rented at a very small charge. The mills also built churches in which their employees may worship. Everything is done to make theirs a happy and contented lot. Very little trouble is experienced in labor relations, for most of the people are natives of the town, some, however, coming in from nearby towns and rural communities.

M

(Written by a Citizen)

The people of the town are almost afraid to enter the mill districts after dark and seldom are any Negroes seen in these parts of town. These mill districts have one or two churches, a school (without athletics), and a policeman who is paid by the mill. Under these conditions one can easily see that there is very little effort for improvement and practically no desire for it, as all the workers want is the dollar. In these districts there are pool rooms, in which a great deal of gambling goes on as well as drinking.

M

(Written by a Citizen)

The cotton mills of my town are said to be in the midst of crime, evils, etc., and the people who work in them said to be the cause of much trouble down town, but this is not wholly true, for most of the people there are as peaceful and good as most of the people in town. Out at these mills much of their time is taken up in working and sleeping, and very few of them loaf for they now have playing grounds and many means of amusements and recreation. They play baseball and football, have their own schools, churches, theatres, etc., and therefore most of their leisure time is taken up. These people are in a separate class from the people in town, and therefore they are seldom willing or ready to coöperate with them. There is no understanding between the two, and often trouble arises because of this fact. On several occasions when a townsman was passing the mill section rocks were thrown at him, or he was cursed and a fight followed, and later when the workmen concerned came to town they received the same treatment. A better feeling could easily be initiated between the two classes if they would only show an interest in each other.

N

(Written by a Citizen)

A few years ago there was a movement on foot to establish a cotton mill in this small rural town. A capitalist from one of our cities had become interested in the community, and wished to increase its industrial activity. At first the plan was received with enthusiasm by the community at large. Then a few of the leaders began to think, got to a certain point in the thought process, and stopped. They immediately declared themselves antagonistic to the plan, and the community, accepting without question their view of the situation, rejected their first ideas of enthusiasm. The result was that the would-be benefactor was turned away as an imposter. The reason for this attitude, as set forth in the somewhat hazy explanations of the prominent men, was that the establishment of a cotton mill, with the influx of laborers which it would bring, would tend to destroy the serene equilibrium of the community,

and give rise to a low social class which would tend to be detrimental.

O

(Written by a Citizen)

The itinerant mill worker is found in two mill suburbs, because the mill corporations control all the dwelling houses and the workers migrate from one town to another in the hope of shaking off the tiresomeness and monotony of life. There is no real home influence for the person who does not own his home. The vulgar and coarse pleasures are all that appeal to this type of resident. Immorality is common. . . .

These suburban districts have only three full-time teachers in the high school department. Therefore the number of courses is limited, only college preparatory courses being offered. As a result, a great elimination of pupils takes place. These go out into the community unsuited to any specific vocation and usually become more or less delinquent. Further, elementary pupils are brought into contact with high school pupils and are often influenced by them to their own sorrow.

P

(Written by a Teacher)

The cotton mill section of P is a community entirely to itself. Though it ought to be fully a part of P it has its own school and own churches. I guess the same cotton mill story is true here as is true in many other places of the South. Yet, I think, perhaps it is a little worse in P, because not even a paternalistic attitude is shown toward the mill people. They are left unguided. They work long hours, have poor living conditions, and receive poor pay. To go into the homes of these people is to be brought face to face with facts that cause righteous indignation. The pale faces, lack of energy, lack of pride, lack of interest in life tell the story of the sale of human life to put a few more dollars in the employer's pocket. The mill attracts a rather low class of people. Mobility is high.

In the mill, children under age are working. When the inspector comes to P the word is passed around by the employer that he is coming and there is a wholesale jumping out of the

windows or escaping from the mill the quickest and best way possible.

The mill school is a disgrace to P. It is a one-room building, poorly lighted. One teacher teaches all the pupils from the first to the fourth grades. She has between sixty and seventy, whom she teaches in relays. Those she teaches in the morning work in the mill in the afternoon if they are not too small, and vice versa. The whole aim of the child seems to be to attain the age of fourteen so that he can stop school and go to work. In many cases the children stop school before they are fourteen because at the main P school, to which they go from the sixth grade on, the compulsory attendance law is poorly enforced. The reason for this is perhaps that the family which dominates the town is proud to have as many workers as possible in the mill. The superintendent is very anxious to please this family, and when his teachers report unlawful absences he conveniently forgets to make the report to headquarters. Perhaps this illustration will serve to give another light on the school situation. In talking with the superintendent last year he quite confidentially told me that P school was getting an extra teacher because of the over-crowded conditions at the mill school. Are not the mill school children entitled to their quota of teachers? Is not their training just as essential as that of the children who come to the larger school? Last year consolidation was begun in P. School children from eighteen miles away were brought into P schools on trucks; yet the mill school remains separate and distinct.

The only organized effort in the mill village for the betterment of the community is the church, which is bound by the traditional ideas of religion. A sixty-minute sermon twice a month and a Sunday school that meets every Sunday morning is about the limit of its activity. Twice last year they did have a box party to raise money for the church.

Q

(Written by a Citizen)

The cotton mill workers in Q[2] are in a pitiful situation. They live in little isolated communities. These communities resemble

[2]A two-industry town.

feudal communities and in fact a mild form of feudalism does exist. The mill worker has no stake in the community; he lives in a home that belongs to the mill; he is a poor citizen and has no sympathy or interest in the welfare of the city. The cotton mill workers are migratory people; they are continually roaming from one feudal community to another. They will not pay their bills; the stores always deliver goods to these people C.O.D. Delivery boys dread to go to these communities after dark, because they are afraid of being "rocked" by the mill boys. Cotton mill people haven't any ambition for their children. They hate the law that makes their children attend school. These children make poor students. They know no discipline, and the teachers are unable to get any coöperation from their parents. The cotton mill workers take no interest in local or national politics, and it is very seldom that they vote; they do not subscribe to the newspapers, and they have no high ideals or aims. Their homes are dirty, and there is a great deal of sickness among these people.

The workers in the other industry in Q constitute a very good class of people. They do not form little communities around their respective working places. The workers as a rule own their homes. You find flowers and gardens in their yards. These workers are very satisfied, and a majority of them stay years and years at the same factory. They are proud of their jobs, they try to increase their efficiency, they are interested in the welfare of the city, and these workers have elected a man to represent them on the city council. Many of the workers go to church, and some of them attend the same church that the manufacturers attend. They love their children and are anxious for them to attend school. There are several boys attending the University and other colleges whose parents are employed in the plants. The worker is a more skillful worker than the mill employee; he has more personality, and he regards everybody as his equal. He is ready to stand up for his rights and ever willing to fight for his home and country.

Every year the help is changing at the cotton mills. Let no one mistake the difference in the two types of workmen for a difference in blood or ideals. This difference is nothing but the natural result of a baneful feudalism. As concrete evidence you can take two brothers, one of whom goes to the cotton

mill, the other to a factory. The first goes to ruin; the other enters an industry which has not adopted feudalism and grows in self-respect. Within ten or fifteen years their families will not associate with each other. They become totally unlike in every way. One man pays his debts and owns his home, keeps clean and dresses his family well and takes better care of his sick children. He wears no yoke of any kind and fears no boss; he does not go off at night seeking some other slave driver to whom he can sell himself and his family. The mill employee, on the contrary, had just as soon live in one mill village as another. His morals are low; his home is dirty, and his family's health is poor.

The cotton mill has always created a feudalistic community. It has been due to the cotton mill system. The work is light and does not require much skill; therefore many women and children are employed, and this has disrupted the health, morals, and ideals of these people. The cotton mills usually own dwelling houses, and as a result the workers have no stake in their communities. There are many mill owners trying to better the conditions of their workers by encouraging them to buy homes, to take an interest in life, and to acquire some self-respect.

As a general rule this comparison between the two types of workers holds true, but we must not forget that there are many respectable, skillful, and high-grade workers employed in the cotton mills and that there are some workers in the other industry without self-respect, skill, or honor.

Q

(Written by a Citizen)

The community is not organized to the best advantage of its citizens. The city has a poor form of government, and it has not until recently done anything for the working man's section of town. Consider the paving of the streets. When this work was begun the first streets to be paved were those that the leading citizens, that is, the owners of the factories, lived on. So right here opened a conflict between the laboring class of people and the capitalists. The laboring class began to "kick" because the city council did not have their street paved. They said they paid as high taxes as the higher class did and

they wanted good streets also. It might be said here that most of the laboring people own their homes. This conflict is not fully settled yet, but the streets of the laboring class are being paved very rapidly now, since they have a member of the city council who will fight for their rights. . . .

There are some churches in Q that cannot work together. The Methodist church suffered a split in its congregation several years ago. They formerly had their church on Jefferson Street. The congregation decided to build a bigger and better church. A new church was built, and when it was finished the "society folks" of the congregation decided that the poor members of the church should build a church of their own, down in their section of the town. That caused a split in the congregation, and the people that lived in the south end of town built a church on South Main Street and the other party in the congregation built a church on North Main Street. These two churches are on the same street, only five blocks apart, and neither congregation has anything to do with the other. Both churches belong to the same conference and each has a preacher of its own. The congregation on North Main Street has the larger and prettier church and the better preacher. There are several denominations in Q that have two churches, and in nearly every case there is one church located in the north section of town where the rich class of people live and another located in the south section of town where the laboring class of people live.

The school was formerly split over the same conflict between the capitalist and laboring classes, but the split between the two classes has been remedied to some extent, because the school board was compelled to pass a law dividing Q up into certain school districts. . . .

As has already been seen, the problems of this community are caused mostly by the conflicts between the capitalist class of people and the working class. These two classes are divided on nearly everything that the town tries to do. Another reason for the conflict between these two classes is that the people do not like to spend their money for improvements.

The way the rich people have been acting toward certain improvements shows that they are looking out for themselves and trying to make all the money they can for themselves.

R

(Written by a Teacher)

R[3] is an industrial town. The rate of mobility is high both in the shops and in the mill village. Little community work is carried on by the people themselves in these districts. However, some community work is carried on by the railroad and the owners of the mill village. The standard of living and the type of workmen employed in the shops is much higher than in the mill village. Large numbers of the workers in the shops live in R proper and send their children through the high school, while there are no children in the high school from the mill village. The mill workers form a class apart and have little or no social contact with the people outside the mill village.

S[4]

(Written by a Teacher)

Until recently there has been no need for charity work. The people who work in the factory are a high class of working people and are well paid. They also have a system of insurance that helps in case of sickness or death among the employees. . . .

The workmen in the yarn and hosiery mills are not the same type of people as those employed in other industrial plants of the town. There is a problem here for the community. The people are ignorant and shiftless. They do not care for an education. As soon as the children are above the compulsory school age, they are taken from school and put to work. Parents try to evade the school law and put the children to work even before they are fourteen. One mother, when told that her twelve-year-old daughter had to go to school, told the superintendent that it was not his business whether the child was sent to school or not.

With all of this shiftlessness and ignorance there have been very few cases for the community to look after. In one instance, where a man who drew a small wage tried to support his own and his sister's families, they had to be looked after

[3]A two-industry town.

[4]A two-industry town.

by the community. Individuals, churches, and the Red Cross are always willing to take care of such cases.

T

(Written by a Teacher)

. . . Just now the development of a small cotton mill community has started in an old and established residential section, an action that will cause endless friction. A trained social worker would have seen this and brought it to the attention of those concerned before it was too late.

U

(Written by a Teacher)

. . . The establishment of these cotton mills brought into our town a number of employees, the majority of whom are honest, law-abiding citizens. Schools have been established in both sections, but the children in East U after completing the seventh grade enter the high school in U. Those at A school employ one high school teacher, and in this section the people take more interest in their homes and seem to be of higher intellectual grade.

V

(Written by a Citizen)

At V the mill company furnishes its employees with houses that are very comfortable and are equipped with electric lights and water connections. This is a recent improvement, however, for not until 1919 did the village have electric lights. The company also has a nice brick store which furnishes the employees with clothes and groceries very reasonably. It is not compulsory for the employees to trade with the company store nor has it ever been, but in the early days (forty years ago) most of the employees did, for two reasons. There were no other stores near, and if business were bad the employees had to take their wages in trade or else wait until the company sold enough cloth to pay them. I have heard one old man say that in the beginning the operatives sometimes worked for three or four months without drawing a cent of money. This was because times were hard, money was scarce, and the owners could not find buyers for their produce.

Today V has a population of about one thousand, served by six dry goods and grocery stores, three churches, a town hall, and a nice modern brick school building. V has such fraternal organizations as the Masons, Woodmen, Junior Order, and Odd Fellows.

I think that I can say without partiality that the inhabitants are the best class of mill people that I have ever seen. As we all know, most mill people are looked upon as being the most ignorant and the least permanent of any of our laboring classes. Usually too they are looked upon as morally low. Much of this bad opinion arises, no doubt, because of their moving about from place to place. Now this will apply to lots of our cotton mill communities, but not to V. The people are very permanent. When the mill was started labor was plentiful and cheap. The company had only a few houses and needed only a few employees. They wanted good people and were careful not to hire bad ones or those who would not be permanent. If they found they had made a mistake they let the bad ones go at once. Thus only the best were allowed to stay. Their permanence can be illustrated by this example: I know many families that have been there since 1900, and one that has been there since the mill was built in the eighties. A striking indication of their superiority, one which is rarely if ever found among any class of laboring people, is their desire for education. They have always had a good school, in the beginning only a grammar grade school, but in 1910 V was given a county high school. The people voted a special tax, and a new school building was built. The school grew and it became the leading high school of the county, both intellectually and in athletics. V has turned out more preachers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and business men than any other community in the county.

Those of us who have had experience know, however, that employers do not favor higher education. Mill owners at V are no exception to the rule, and when they saw their prospective weavers and spinners completing the high school and going to college they began to plan to get rid of the school.

Another factor which I believe makes this village an extraordinary mill community is the homogeneity of the people. Most of the people are from farms somewhere in the state.

All are engaged in the same kind of work, and almost all are interested in the same problems. There are not so many Negroes in the community, and they know their place and stay in it. Moreover, owing no doubt to the workers' permanence, about two-thirds of the people own their homes.

Some conflict arose over the school question. I said above that the employers were beginning to play with the idea of doing away with the high school and have only a grammar school. The people wanted a modern building and asked the company to donate funds to help build it. The owners offered to erect a building if the people would consent to consolidate the V high school with that of Z. The people held an election and instead of voting to consolidate with Z they voted almost unanimously to keep the school and to build a new forty-thousand-dollar school building. This did not please the employers at all, and they said the election was not fair and must be held again. In the meantime they had a petition sent around for all those who favored consolidation to sign and instructed many of their foremen how they expected them and their families to sign. As a consequence V high school is consolidated with that of Z. In many ways I think this is for the best. The boys and girls have more advantages at the Z school than at V, for the people of Z are more able to provide leadership to secure advantages. V boys and girls have held first place both in school work and athletics since they have been going to Z, and the mill company has given V the promise of a new modern brick building for the grammar school.

CHAPTER XVI

BACKGROUNDS OF WELFARE WORK: GENERAL

Welfare work by the individualistic mill owner of a state long characterized by individualism, as North Carolina has been, might almost be considered a development by spontaneous generation. Often the example and experience of one mill influenced another, but just as often there is no direct trace of such influence. And yet underlying all the present welfare work and all the influence of the special conditions in North Carolina and the South are the traditions of the textile industry. The tone and often the very form that we find in the welfare work in these mills are as much the heritage of the industry as its characteristic mechanical principles or its organization of personnel. Indeed, certain parts of this heritage, and certainly welfare work in general, are older far than the oldest cotton mill. For the principles upon which it is founded are rooted in fundamental facts of human nature and human need. It is as old as the relation of master and man, of employer and employee. It may be well to review briefly this background in the history of welfare work. Such a perspective may help to show in a clearer light the history of North Carolina mill welfare work as a single chapter in a long and complicated story.

Welfare work is, then, not a modern invention. While this statement may seem a truism, evidences of belief to the contrary are to be found on every hand. Some attribute the widespread movement and interest in welfare to our modern conception of human society as an institution capable of being molded and remolded. Some say it is a result of the new humanitarian spirit abroad in the world. Others would claim it as a by-product of the spread of democracy and the consequent higher valuation of man as man. Various groups and individuals would have us believe that it has its origin in the cunning, diabolical brain or the warm, generous heart—depending on their point of view—of the modern capitalist.

None of these points of view is quite true. Welfare work seems to take its rise, in each specific instance and in all ages, out of the same fundamental human qualities. It is an ancient activity in which individuals and groups have engaged ever since man has been interested in his own gain on the one hand, or has been receptive to the appeal of suffering or hardship on the other. It is the result of the desire to get all one can out of a given situation—master in the form of more work, man in the form of "equivalents of compensation." But it is based equally on another trait of human nature observable through all ages and in all forms of society, and especially in many phases of modern social work, namely, the satisfaction which men in both positions seem to derive from the relation of patron and protégé.

And when we add to these bases of welfare work the weight of centuries of tradition it is not surprising that certain well-defined patterns have grown up. To be sure, social and economic revolutions disturb these patterns, but it is not long before the details of the new welfare work have fallen into lines similar to the old, though adapted to the new conditions. A brief review of the history of welfare work will suffice to indicate the origins from which it seems to spring, the main lines along which it has developed, the tenacity of its traditions. Finally, for our immediate purposes, such a review will show the rôle of the textile industry in the story of welfare work, and, in turn, the influence of tradition upon all later textile welfare work.

In order that we may have a test by which to judge whether such activities in the past come up to our present standards of welfare work, especially as carried on in industry, it will be well to use a modern generally accepted definition of such activities. Industrial social work, industrial betterment, industrial welfare work, or whatever name we call it has been defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the federal Department of Labor for the purposes of its study as "anything for the comfort and improvement, intellectual and social, of the employees, over and above wages paid which is not a necessity of the industry or required by law." [1] As the Bureau investigators

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[1] *Welfare Work for Employees in Industrial Establishments in the United States* (Washington: Govt. Printing Office, 1919), *Bulletin No. 250.*

include in the study which this definition prefaces a discussion of everything from individual drinking cups to community recreation programs, from kindergartens to death benefits, it is obvious that they interpret their already broad definition rather widely. If we may be allowed to understand by the strictly modern terms in the definition the parallel ideas under different systems of economy—as, for instance, custom in the place of law before there were any labor laws as we know them today—it is broad enough to include all we can possibly wish to include. Another very important fact to be kept in mind in labeling anything as welfare work is that the term is comparative. This is well expressed by L. A. Boettiger in his discussion of the subject: "Welfare work cannot be defined unless there is a fairly definite level of accepted employment practice. This level may be determined by custom, by law, or by the relation between the supply and demand for labor. Accordingly, such benefits as may have been granted to the workers at various times cannot be called welfare work unless they exceed the demands of custom, of law, or of the market." [2] For this reason housing by the mills has not been considered in this study as a welfare activity strictly speaking, because first the labor requirements of the industry and then its customs necessitated company housing. In recent years, however, at those mills that go beyond the requirements of necessity in the quality, comfort, or appearance of their dwellings, housing has come into the field of welfare work.

EARLY WELFARE WORK

People still living in the South have knowledge, either at first hand or from their parents, of the activities of many slave owners "for the comfort and improvement of the workers over and above [food, clothing and shelter] which [were] not a necessity of the industry or required by [custom]." "Treats" to the whole body of slaves on high days and holidays, a little better food or quarters than the merest physical needs demanded, attention to the sick beyond that prompted

[2] *Employee Welfare Work* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1923), p. 24.

by the need of care for a valuable piece of property, care of the disabled and superannuated, interest in spiritual needs and efforts to minister to them—all such things done by some owners were probably as common as similar activities of employers today. And there is little doubt that such amelioration of the lot of the worker went on as far back in history as there has been owner and slave or master and man. Relations between them existed through close personal contact. And whenever one man comes to know another very well, his joys and sorrows, his problems and his little triumphs, the man in the superior position will sooner or later, for reasons of friendliness, of humanitarian feeling, of personal vanity at being superior, or because he believes he will profit from it in loyalty or increased service, begin to do some things that custom or law or the necessity of the work does not require.

If we had the full history of many of the great upheavals, political and economic, that have torn society it is highly probable we should find that each carried with it a collapse of the privileges and amenities that peace, personal contact, and custom had built up. There is evidence in the Domesday Book that the Norman conquest turned many freedmen into villeins, and many villeins into serfs,[3] just as the later and more stupendous Industrial Revolution destroyed the freedom of the town and country worker, and with it the many practices for his "comfort and improvement, intellectual and social," that had grown up beside his work.

All through the Middle Ages custom was the law; when a thing was done long enough and over a wide enough area it became custom—law—and was no longer welfare work. Beyond the customary benefits in mediaeval times we find occasional references to special activities which were not required by custom, the law of the manor. One of these consisted in holiday games and dancing on the green, "beneficently patronized by the lord's family."[4] On the occasion of boon works (extra services) at harvest, "the lord provided 'love meals' to encourage the laborers to greater exertion and in return the

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[3]Ephraim Lipson, *An Introduction to the Economic History of England* (London: A. & C. Black, Ltd., 1915), p. 26.

[4]Boettiger, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

villeins did 'love bones,' extra boon works without any gratuities."[5] Later history suggests that even these love meals became "customary" and hence no longer "welfare work," since we find that custom prescribed just how many meals the lord was to provide and what the food was to be—on so many days only drink provided, on so many food only, on so many both food and drink, on so many broth or cheese.[6] In the meantime "welfare work" had moved on, for we find accounts of manors where "on the last two days of harvest each laborer could bring a comrade to supper."[7]

There are many scattering evidences of special privileges in gathering wood, of remitted fines or even dues, of charitable donations.[8] Great nobles gave huge alms, there being certain days on which every applicant at the gate received a dole. Some fed scores every day, increasing to hundreds on festival days.[9] It is natural to suppose that such crowds included a large number of the villeins and serfs of the lord himself, and it is likely that this was the method of caring for superannuated workers. The *Rules of St. Robert*, a manual for lords of the period, advised them not to allow their alms to be wasted by the house-servants, but that they should be "freely, discretely, and orderly without dispute or strife divided among the poor, the sick, and the beggars"; and another rule states: "When your bailiffs and servants of lands come before you, address them fairly and speak pleasantly to them, and discretely and gently ask if your people do well, and how your corn is growing, and how profitable your ploughs and stock are, and make these demands openly, and your knowledge shall be respected."[10] Couched in different language this might be direct from a modern work on maintaining the personal touch in industry!

It is difficult to learn of the betterment activities of the manor, because when they were common enough to be noted in

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[5]Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[6]W. J. Ashley, *An Introduction to English Economic History and Theory* (4th ed.; London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1919–20), I, 20.

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 9.

[8]Boettiger, *Employee Welfare Work*, p. 35.

[9]Ashley, *op. cit.*, I, 328–30.

[10]Boettiger, *op. cit.*, p. 34. Quoted from Walter of Henley.

the annals or records of the time they had probably been carried on long enough to have become customary, and were mentioned rather in the breach than the observance. They were law and no longer welfare work. Such activities of the gilds are more easily discovered because of their fuller records.

The gild merchant had a strongly fraternal spirit. The merchants of Southhampton had rules that if a gildsman were ill he should be given two loaves and a gallon of wine and a dish of cooked food, while two of the approved men of the gild should visit him and look to his condition; second, that the gild should put up money to procure the deliverance of a gildsman from prison; third, that a gildsman who fell into poverty should receive one mark from the gild at its meeting.[11] Their fraternal spirit extended to protecting the group from competition—from too many booths at a fair or from price cuts. One herring merchant went to court because, when he offered his goods for sale at a lower price than his fellows, they assaulted and beat him and left him for dead, so that he despaired for his life.[12]

The craft gilds showed much the same policy. Of the dyers of Coventry some refused to be bound by the gild rates, "so that the gild hired Welshmen and Irishmen to waylay and kill them! This drastic treatment of blacklegs represents the mediaeval equivalent for picketing" [13] At any rate it is obvious that the members' enthusiasm for the benefits of the gild carried them to extremes.

Besides the regular control of hours, competition, prices, wages, and apprenticeship, the craft gild provided many benefits for its members. Indeed, many of these societies were started for purposes of religious association and grew in craft direction, while still keeping religion as a prominent feature. Every gild maintained lights upon the altar of its patron saint. Most of them provided for attendance on the obsequies of a member, and it was common to provide from twelve to sixty masses for his soul.[14] The plays and pageants, based

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[11]Lipson, *op. cit* p. 246.

[12]*Loc. cit.*

[13]*Ibid.*, p. 305.

[14]Ashley, *op. cit.*, I, 138.

on Bible and Church history and the mysteries, and enacted by the gilds, constituted a large part of the religious education of the people as well as a means of entertainment and social intercourse. Some gilds were "friendly societies." The Carpenters of London in 1333 provided that "if any brother or sister fall into poverty by God's hand or in sickness so that he may not keep himself then shall he have of the brotherhood each week 14 pence during this poverty, after he hath lain sick a fortnight; shall be timely visited an holpen . . . and shall receive livery cloths at common cost in order that he might not be put to shame in the gild assembly."[15] One gild furnished aid to a member who became bankrupt, another a weekly pension to the widow of a member "so long as she shall behave herself and keep single."[16] Another limited such allowances to members of seven years' standing. The Goldsmiths in 1341 built almshouses, and several gilds received legacies from members to carry on such work. Ashley reminds us that such gifts or pensions were quite small—too small to be of much relief in case of need, and were looked upon, not as money due in return for past contributions to the treasury but rather as alms given by the rest of the members in order to acquire spiritual benefits.[17]

A third welfare function was education. Many gilds founded and maintained free grammar schools, so that the working man did not a little to keep learning alive and, what was more important, available to certain lower ranks of people during the Middle Ages.

The foregoing examples, taken from various ages and countries, show one common characteristic—that when the master looked beyond the bare requirements of work and wages, his efforts to better the condition of his men have always been predicated upon personal relationships and contacts. The two groups were bound together by ties other than those of work and wages. When we add to this the very human desire on the part of the master to secure as much work as possible from the man or, as Boettiger expresses it, to exploit the

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[15]Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 305.
[16]*Ibid.*, p. 306.
[17]Ashley, *op. cit.*, I, 324.

margin between what a worker *can* do if he is really interested and what he *does* under ordinary circumstance, we have the two fundamental reasons for welfare work in all situations.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF WELFARE WORK

With the Industrial Revolution came the factory system and conditions under which these personal ties were almost wholly loosened; under which the master knew nothing of the man and cared little about his manner of life; under which the new machines promised such profits that the employer did not need to think much about the efficiency that attention to social and welfare work might have brought to his workers. Under such conditions he did not see that welfare work "paid."

Indeed, there are suggestions of such a regime before the Industrial Revolution in that branch of production which most nearly approached the factory system, namely, the clothiers, entrepreneurs in the woolen industry. There were complaints that the clothiers, middlemen who "put out" their material, were unfair to the workers to whom it was given. As early as 1555 clothiers had to be regulated by law to prevent their oppressing the weavers.[18] In 1586 Queen Elizabeth's council notified the local officials to command the clothiers in the name of the queen to set the unemployed to work. "It is unfitting that clothiers should at their pleasure dismiss their work people, for those who have gained in the profitable times must now be content to lose for the public good till the decay of trade be remedied." [19]

Two hundred years later in England and later still on the continent, with the coming of the great mechanical inventions, the factory bell and the power-driven machine were substituted for self-imposed hours and hand power. With the new way of doing things there sprang up a new class of employers who seemed to have none of the milk of human kindness. From 1790 to about 1850 in England the lot of the worker was a wretched one. Hours were long. We are often told, to impress

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[18]Ashley, *op. cit.*, I, 233.

[19]Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

us with the length of hours, that one shift of children crawled into the beds just vacated by the other shift, so that "the beds never got cold." But, after all, when there were two shifts neither could work more than twelve hours, and at most factories they worked longer. From 5:00 or 6:00 A.M. to 7:00 or 8:00 P.M., Saturdays included, was usual, with an hour or two extra every day during busy times, even extending to the entire night on two or three nights a week. The children of the working force had to clean machinery during the meal periods, snatching a bit of food as they worked, and spending at least a part of every Sunday at such cleaning. There was a nominal requirement, for the parish apprentices, of church attendance and education, which was almost never carried out during the earlier years of the mills. The temperature of the work rooms was kept at 75 or 85 degrees, more often nearer the higher mark, and there were fines for opening a window. Indeed, there were fines for every sort of thing. Wages dropped until it took the whole family, down to tots of five and six, to earn enough for bread, while the parish children who were apprenticed to the mills and mines, though supposed to be at least seven, were sent at five years of age.[20]

Living conditions were naturally bad because of the rapid growth of small towns into cities, brought about by the shift of industry to a new section. The apprentice children were crowded together in the rudest barracks, with a dirty blanket to sleep upon and another for a cover; the houses for other employees were cheaply constructed hovels or tenements put up by speculators to take advantage of the boom of the towns. They were crowded to the limit; in some, dark and damp cellars were used for human habitations. Sanitary conditions were such that cholera and putrid fever were common.[21]

Workers were treated brutally, especially the children. A man stood at the factory gate with a lash or leather strap and struck everyone who was late; children apprentices who were late were whipped from the barracks to the factory, so that they often woke terrified in the middle of the night and

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[20]J. L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Town Laborer, 1790-1832* (New York; Longmans, Green & Co., 1920), *passim,* [21]*Ibid.*

ran breathless to the factory gate fearing that they had overslept; fathers beat their own children in the factory to save them from the overseer's worse beating. In the mines conditions and cruelty were even worse than in the mills because of the darkness and dampness and the heavy work. Women and children dragged heavy loads, hitched like mules to the awkward trucks and going on hands and knees. Small children were used to drag cars of coal through winding passages too small for an adult to creep along. A child of four or five would sit alone in the darkness for fourteen or sixteen hours a day to tend the trap doors which controlled ventilation. One visitor, seeing a boy with blood running down his cheek, asked the overseer how it had happened and got the reply that the boy was afraid to go through the dark passages alone, but that he was more afraid of blood, so he, the overseer, just threw a small lump of coal lightly at him to graze his cheek and then he obeyed! [22]

BEGINNING OF WELFARE WORK IN FACTORIES

A dark and terrible picture this, with no light spots of legal protection, for such factory laws as were passed were not enforced. Only a few bits of relief are afforded by some individual mill managers and owners. One of the earliest of these was Samuel Oldknow, who started a factory at Marple about 1780. His policy of selecting his workers in an effort to get a higher class of people than was common in the mills of the day was unusual enough to call attention to his mill; the fact that the houses he provided, in accordance with the rapidly growing custom of housing employees, were slightly better than the average was enough to mark his mill as a model. He had a large establishment which was really an industrial community combining agriculture and quarrying.[23] Another of the earliest experiments was that of Strutt of Belper, who seems to have conducted some activities for the religious and other betterment of his workers in the seventeen-eighties. We shall have occasion to mention this work more in detail in

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[22]J. L. and Barbara Hammond, *op. cit., passim.*

[23]G. D. H. Cole, *Robert Owen* (London: E. Benn, Ltd., 1925), pp. 54–55.

connection with early welfare work in America.[24] A third pioneer, starting in the following decade, was David Dale, the owner of New Lanark, a strict Calvinist and a high type of citizen, who must have been much more considerate and more benevolent than the average "cotton king" of the period. Like Oldknow, he tried to collect a group of self-respecting operatives. When the mill burned he paid the wages of the employees until it could be rebuilt; his longest day was of thirteen hours, with an hour and a half out for meals; he made some provision for the education of the many parish children in his mill and furnished clean quarters, good food, and kind treatment for them. He even provided playgrounds and, what was more revolutionary, gave them some little time in which to play.[25]

The experiments of Oldknow and Dale had a profound influence on Robert Owen, the best known of the early pioneers in welfare work. Indeed, he can well be called the father of industrial welfare work. His example influenced so many other mill owners that his methods became almost crystallized into a tradition, and the welfare activities of mills today are strangely like his innovations at New Lanark. He rose from the position of draper's apprentice to an employer of labor at eighteen. The young mill manager became acquainted about 1792 with Samuel Oldknow's factory at Marple. Naturally a thinker and a social philosopher, he was impressed by Oldknow's experiments. Before acquiring a partnership in the New Lanark mills in 1800 [26] he tried out some of these ideas in the several plants of which he was manager. To Oldknow's ideas he added his own, so that before he went to New Lanark he had already been evolving a plan for the "government" of the mill and the community. "I say 'government,' for my intention was not to be a mere manager of cotton mills as such mills were at this time generally managed, but to introduce principles in the conduct of the people which I had successfully commenced in the mills [with which he was con-

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[24]George S. White, *Memoir of Samuel Slater* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia, 1836), p. 223.

[25]Cole, *op. cit.*, pp. 54–55. [26]*Ibid.*, p. 68.

nected earlier] and to change the conditions of the people who, I saw, were surrounded by circumstances having an injurious influence upon the entire population of New Lanark." [27] Of course the experience of Dale and his willingness to allow the new partner to go further with the experiments formed an ideal situation for Owen. And in the next few years he built up a village which stood almost alone in the day of misery and degradation for the early factory worker.

One great handicap to Owen was the quality of the people. Factories were unpopular, depending for workers upon the parish children apprentices, the poorest of the country people from the least profitable agricultural sections, and the lowest stratum of city proletariat—all three classes really forced into the mills. "Drunkenness and immorality," he tells us, "were very prevalent, thieving common, housing conditions disgusting and filth was everywhere, both in the houses and in the streets of the village." [28] Though very religious, the people found in their different sects a ground for quarrels. As an outsider coming to the factories of Scotland from the south of England, Owen was unpopular with the working people. They systematically opposed all his changes, both because of his being a "foreigner" and because the experiments interfered with their personal liberty. With more knowledge of human nature than is common, he realized the naturalness of their feeling and was very patient. He did nothing suddenly or in a revolutionary manner. His tact and the fact that so many of his changes were soon seen to be for the workers' benefit and comfort gradually won them over.[29]

Owen closed the private retail shops in the village and set up company stores which sold at lower prices—as much as 25 per cent lower—such things as milk, fuel, and even whiskey. He improved housing conditions by adding a story to the little houses, and giving each family two rooms instead of one. At the same time he tried to make them keep the houses clean. He stopped the dumping of rubbish and refuse in the street, laid out and cleaned the streets, and initiated sys-

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[27]Quoted from Owen's autobiography by Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

[28]Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 75.

tematic collection of refuse. To raise the standard of housekeeping, he instituted a system of health visitors, appointed by the workers. Though they were at first driven from the doors, they gradually succeeded in their work, and the standard rose until New Lanark was easily the cleanest village in the country.[30]

To improve conduct inside the mill, Owen instituted his famous system of "silent monitors," blocks of wood, of a different color on each of four sides, which hung near the workplace of each operative. The color exposed indicated the conduct of the employee for the preceding day—black for bad; blue, indifferent; yellow, good; and white, excellent. The grading was done each day by the superintendent, but the worker had a right to complain about his grade to Owen himself. He expresses great pleasure at seeing the darker colors gradually give way to the lighter.[31] This device is one which, with an elaborated and more scientific grading, has been instituted by many modern plants as a means of setting up competition among employees. In fact, all the changes which he gradually made during the first thirteen years of his work at New Lanark have either become standard for many plants or have had their vogue and been supplanted by more advanced ideas.

Owen realized that the employment of the parish apprentices could never be managed satisfactorily. The authorities would persist in sending them to the factory younger than the law prescribed, that is, from five to ten years old instead of from seven to twelve and he decided to stop taking them at all. He was, moreover, working out those ideas of education which were leading him to believe that children should not work until they were ten years of age, and he accepted none under that age. The remaining children, along with all the other employees, worked only ten and a half hours exclusive of meals, or twelve in all, at a time when other employers were working their operatives fourteen and sometimes sixteen hours exclusive of meals and including in their work forces large numbers of children between six and eleven.[32]

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[30] *Ibid.*, p. 78.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 78–79.
[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 73 ff.

One of the most important reforms that Owen instituted was his school for the children of the village. His company store, though selling at 25 per cent cheaper than private stores, made a profit of £700 a year, which he used to maintain schools.[33] His educational program, based on his firm belief that character is made *for* the individual and not *by* him, emphasized the importance of a good environment. He carried Dale's idea of playing fields much further by putting organized play—dancing, singing, music, and military exercise—into the school curriculum. But most of all he emphasized moral teaching, conduct, and character building. His desire to take only a moderate profit from the business and to carry on his welfare activities had caused him to lose partner after partner, but it was the school that finally caused his last and otherwise philanthropic Quaker partners to force him out. They thought he was teaching laziness, wickedness, and infidelity.[34]

Nevertheless, in his twenty-five years at New Lanark, Owen had proved that welfare work could be done without sacrificing dividends—that it paid. He had proved that it would be appreciated by the employees, for his villagers were finally as enthusiastic over it as he. Indeed, why should they not have been? They had better houses, a clean village, better wages (though authorities differ on this point), wages during unemployment, sick benefits, medical aid, a savings bank. And Owen had put in all these things through moral suasion, without forcing a man to accept anything he did not want to. Last but not least, Owen's increasingly public life had called so much attention to his model community, that it was visited by thousands and was known by even more. It was a concrete and powerful argument for reforms and a pattern for employers who might have beneficent inclinations but who feared their financial consequences.

There are other occasional references of simple philanthropic company activities contemporary with and just following Owen's experiments at New Lanark, which, though they were unusual enough to make them striking, were just as

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[33]Boettiger, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[34]Cole, *op. cit.*, pp. 156–162.

truly forerunners and patterns of the later textile welfare work. Edward Baines, writing in 1832, often mentions Mr. Ashton's model factory at Hyde, started in 1801. "This gentleman has erected commodious dwellings for his workpeople, with each of which he has connected every convenience that can minister to comfort. [He does not tell what those conveniences are.] He resides in the immediate vicinity [as did Robert Owen] and has frequent opportunities of maintaining a cordial association with his operatives . . . He has built a school, where 640 children, chiefly belonging to his establishment, are instructed on Tuesday in reading, writing, and arithmetic, etc. A library, connected with this school is eagerly resorted to, and the people frequently read after the hours of labour have expired. An infant school is during the week attended by 280 children, and in the evenings others are instructed by masters selected for the purpose." Baines saw many evidences and results of "such enlightened benevolence." [35] Dr. Ure describes a large building erected as a mill community house, mostly by the mill owners of Southport, in 1805. It contained an assembly hall and forty rooms for classes, committees, and a library. By 1832, when he described it, it had become a well-established and "admirable institution" giving moral and religious education, and responsible for "the general decorum that pervades this town and neighborhood." It did much to convince the public that "education for the lowest classes was not dangerous." He saw the 4,000 young people, taught by 400 teachers, at assembly, and accompanied by the organ "their hymn singing thrilled through the heart like the festival chorus of Westminister." [36]

BEGINNINGS IN AMERICAN MILLS

These early efforts toward the amelioration of the lot of the cotton mill workers had great influence on the first builders of mills in America. Samuel Slater's early mill experience was

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[35] *History of the Cotton Manufacture* (London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher, and P. Jackson, 1835), p. 448.

[36] *Philosophy of Manufactures,* quoted by White, *Memoir of Samuel Slater,* p. 174.

in the plant at Belper, early known as a model mill. Tenche Coxe, interested in the establishment of manufactures in the United States, made a tour of the mill section of England, and wrote of that mill to Albert Gallatin. He found that the mill had established a school for the employees as early as 1782, that it had built commodious stone houses and "a neat refectory fitted up within the works, where any of the work-people, who choose, may have a comfortable pint of hot tea, or coffee, including sugar and milk, for a halfpenny. The persons who regularly join in the refreshment, become entitled to medical attendance gratis. A dancing room for the recreation of the young is also provided."[37] The fact that Slater's early experience had been in such a mill accounts for the fact that, upon establishing his mill in 1790, he "no sooner found that his business collected children and young people, who were destitute of the means of instruction, and knowing the plan of his old master, Strutt, at Belper, in establishing a Sunday school, than he followed his example, and opened a school in his own house, sometimes teaching the scholars himself, but generally hired a person to perform that duty. . . . These Sunday schools which followed almost every manufacturing establishment"[38] taught general subjects. As a result, Slater and other manufacturers came into mild conflict with the strict Sabbatarians for this profanation of the day but seem to have won out when they showed that the teachers were religious people who taught morals and religion incidentally in their conversation with the pupils.[39] "These schools, the first of the kind in America, are still continued to the present day [1835]. They have been copied, and extend with the extension of the cotton manufacture through this country; and they have prompted the establishment of similar schools in our seaport towns and in foreign countries." Many were run first as charity schools open on Sunday and later as day schools, the teachers being paid by the mill owners.[40]

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[37]Quoted by White, *Memoir of Samuel Slater,* p. 223.
[38]*Ibid.,* p. 281.
[39]*Ibid.,* p. 283.
[40]*Ibid.,* pp. 107–108.

The writer just quoted, George White, writing a lengthy history of cotton manufacturing in the United States in 1835, does not mention Owen and his influence on American mills. It is probable, however, that the current of his influence, though entering later than Slater's, was not inconsiderable. Francis Lowell and Nathan Appleton visited England and investigated the textile industry before building their mills on the Merrimack River. They were greatly impressed by the degraded condition of most textile workers and with the contrast in Owen's village, and when they built their mills about 1825 they incorporated in them much of what they had seen there.[41]

But what no doubt weighed as heavily with Appleton, Slater, and the others as their English examples, was the fact that had they not made arrangements for physical decency and moral surroundings, they would have got no workers from among the independent Puritans. With free land to be had for the clearing and with the opportunities of the frontier quite as great as its hardships, people had to be lured into the mills. Economic conditions were certainly not forcing them there. Besides, descriptions of most mills as conducted in England had reached America. The accounts reflected the revelation of bad conditions which surrounded the agitation for factory acts in 1816 and 1819, and as a result the reputation of the mills was not very savory.[42] Thus Lucy Larcom's relatives were distressed at the thought of her mother's moving to the mill with her daughters, though "it had had from the beginning a high reputation for good order, morality, piety, and all that was dear to the old-fashioned New England heart."[43]

In most of these early New England mills the providing of houses for families and boarding houses for single workers was the chief form of company welfare work, though almost all seem to have aided churches and Sunday schools. In Lowell the boarding houses enforced many rules of conduct and

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[41]Boettiger, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[42]*Niles' Register*, vol. XV, May 15, 1819.

[43]Lucy Larcom, *A New England Girlhood* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1889), p. 145.

religious observance. The corporation maintained a hospital, encouraged savings, and for a time operated schools. The workers supported several other activities, including the *Lowell Offering*, that famous magazine of the operatives, and also a circulating library, night classes in French and German, and lyceum lectures.[44] A mill at Pomfret, Connecticut, established in 1806, bought up a great deal of land near by "to prevent the introduction of taverns and grog shops with their usually corrupting and demoralizing tendency." In 1812 it erected a community brick building to serve as a schoolhouse and a place for holding meetings.[45] At Troy, Rhode Island (near Fall River), Jedediah Tracy opened a grocery store when he started the mill, kept a district school, a night school, a Sunday school, and a church, forbade grog shops, fostered revivals and religious societies, and made numerous rules of conduct.[46] A village in New Hampshire is mentioned as having gardens and pasturage for cows and swine. Another mill "paid the greater part of the minister's salary after building a meeting house." [47]

An idea of the extent of such welfare activities is furnished by a survey of "every factory of any notoriety" in New England and the Middle Atlantic states, made in 1827-28 by Chandler Holbrook, who visited 143 cotton and 28 woolen factories. He saw girls cultivating flowers in the windows of several mills, some libraries in counting rooms for free use of the employees, and several writing classes. He mentions fifteen "schools" and suggests that there are others; in at least one mill the school was especially for adult illiterates, while Sunday schools seem to have been common.[48]

Cotton mill building started somewhat later in the South than in New England. By the time many mills had been built there the tradition of company housing was pretty well established. Even if it had not been, conditions in the South made it necessary: few towns, sparse population, and the building

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[44]Boettiger, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

[45]White, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

[46]Letter to White, quoted in *Memoir of Samuel Slater*, pp. 130–135.

[47]White, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

[48]Chandler Holbrook, "Journal: A Business Trip Seventy Years Ago," edited by H. E. Ellis in *New England Magazine*, (vol. XX, March, 1899).

of mills in rural situations in order to utilize limited water power advantages. At these mills there grew up company villages where welfare work very similar to the New England activities was undertaken almost as a matter of course. In fact, the very building of mills which would provide employment for the poverty-stricken people was commended as philanthropy in itself by writers, editorial and otherwise, in *DeBow's Review*. William Gregg of South Carolina, Daniel Pratt of Alabama, and Hamilton Smith of Kentucky were praised on this ground by the editor.[49] William Gregg,[50] Governor Patton of Alabama,[51] and the editor of the *Camden Journal*[52] are quoted in speeches or writings expressing similar sentiments. This idea colors the descriptions of villages and accounts of welfare work. Thus Daniel Pratt is commended for "his determination to use his money in such a manner as would contribute to the greatest good of the community. The poorer classes he had particularly in view, and to such he has been the greatest benefactor. It was this spirit that prompted the erection of a cotton factory in 1846." In his village of 800 people there were three churches, two schoolhouses, a store, and dwellings. "Whatever has had a tendency to improve the community morally and socially has not been left undone. Intemperance has been strictly guarded against, and legislation has prohibited the sale of spirits within two miles of the place." The University of Alabama, in conferring upon him the degree of Master of Mechanic and Useful Arts, commended him for supporting schools for laboring men and for "your efficient maintenance of the institutions of the Lord Jesus Christ among your own people . . . You have filled the hand of honest industry with the wages of labor, and erected over the shelterless neat and comfortable homes."[53]

The editor of *DeBow's Review*, in an editorial highly commending Gregg for his efforts in interesting people in the

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[49] *DeBow's Review*, X (1851), 250; XI (1851), 90.
[50] *Ibid.*, XI (1851), 135; VIII (1850), 134.
[51] *Ibid.*, III N. S. (1866), 66.
[52] *Ibid.*, VII (1849), 372.
[53] *Ibid.*, X (1851).

manufacturing of cotton, refers to his mill at Graniteville, South Carolina, started in 1845, as a model factory, where due attention is paid to the comforts, education, and morals of the operatives, and to Gregg as "an enterprising, intelligent and benevolent founder." [54] Gregg himself described the emaciated, half-starved, illiterate people of the rural sections and mentioned the contrast to be seen in them after they had worked a while in the mills.[55] "My experience at Graniteville has satisfied me," he said in another place, "that unless our poor people can be brought together in villages and some means of employment afforded them, it will be an utterly hopeless effort to undertake to educate them. Our company are determined to spare no means which will be necessary to school the children of Graniteville. . . . The company has provided a good schoolhouse with competent teachers, find books, papers, etc., free of charge, and notwithstanding our rule that no one can be permitted to occupy our houses who does not send all his children to school that are between six and twelve, it was with some difficulty at first that we could make up even a small school. With the aid of the ministers of the Gospel on the spot to preach to them and lecture to them on the subject, we have obtained but about sixty children out of one hundred in the village." [56] Incidentally, Graniteville was also a "temperance town, with no liquor sold, and if any one is known to bring any into the place, he is expelled, driven off in disgrace." [57]

The village belonging to the mill at De Kalb, South Carolina, was described enthusiastically in the *Camden Journal* in 1849. It is "pleasantly situated . . . and its neat cottages and thriving gardens present a handsome appearance indicative of comfort and contentment. The moral and mental culture of these families receive [sic] great attention. A day school for their children is kept through the week and at eight every Sabbath morning members of the various churches in town

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[54] *De Bow's Review,* X (1851), 280.
[55] *Ibid.,* VIII (1850), 134–40.
[56] *Ibid.,* XI, 135 f.
[57] *Ibid.,* VIII, 24.

(De Kalb) meet them in Sunday school" . . . as well as furnishing preachers for an afternoon service.[58]

Such then are, briefly, the lines of early development of welfare work in the mill villages of the chief cotton manufacturing centers. Such are the traditions which have come down in the industry as directly and as powerfully as that of methods in work or of the manner of transmitting authority. Before we discuss the reasons for this continuance of traditional policies and of the broader distinctions between welfare work in the textile industry and that in other industries, it may be well to describe the beginning of several special forms of relations between employees and employers, namely, profit sharing and employee representation and coöperation, each with its related welfare features. It was a long time before these schemes reached the textile industry, but they have begun to do so at last.

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[58]Quoted in *ibid.,* VII, 372.

CHAPTER XVII

BACKGROUNDS OF WELFARE WORK: SPECIAL SCHEMES, EXTENT OF WELFARE WORK, WELFARE THEORY

Although our chief interest here lies in the textile industry, it would be well, perhaps, to review briefly the early beginnings of other types of welfare work in different industries. A short survey will suffice to indicate how the lines of development vary and what debts one owes to another.

Recent revived interest in two of these early forms of welfare gives them particular importance. The first of these is the coöperative movement, bare mention of which is all that is necessary here, because it was not long under the control of the employer. Robert Owen tried coöperative stores, but he became impatient of playing with the idea as a mere part of a welfare plan and wanted to reorganize all production and, indeed, society in general, on this basis.[1] Since that time, however, coöperative stores on a small scale have remained one of many forms of employers' outside activities, especially in the textile industry.

The other device is profit sharing, sometimes advancing to co-partnership and various phases of industrial democracy. The fact that this plan touched the textile industry rather early and has recently had a fresh start is sufficient reason for a more detailed survey of its beginnings.

PROFIT SHARING

The experience of the "father of profit sharing," Edme-Jean Leclaire, founder of a firm of painters and interior decorators in Paris, was similar to Robert Owen's, in being a triumph of personality over the difficulties and suspicions in the way. Rising from the position of a poor laborer, he

[1]Cole, *op. cit.*

did not forget his days as an employee; especially were insecurity of employment and the problem of the worker's old age his concern. By 1834, though still a young man, he had gathered a group of loyal, efficient workmen about him whom he paid during the dull times, whom he could count on for honest work when they sent it out themselves, and whom he disciplined. Such was his personal influence that "workmen who left his employ because the discipline was too severe came back of their own accord after suffering drunkenness and freedom." [2]

In 1838 Leclaire started his mutual aid society to provide sickness and death benefits. Writing in 1856 of the early days he said: "I could not enjoy complete happiness when on the day of retiring from business I thought of the lot to befall those steady workmen who had remained attached to me." [3] In 1835 he had come in contact with an economist, Fregier, who told him that the only way to get rid of the existing antagonism between employer and employee was through profit sharing. The economist was simply airing a theory which he soon forgot and with which Leclaire at the time violently disagreed, but whereas Fregier in 1840 mentions profit sharing as an impossible phantom, Leclaire had by that time turned it over in his mind until he had decided it was an excellent device and was then engaged in starting it in his company.[4] He raised wages in 1840, reduced hours and suggested profit sharing to his best employees in 1841, and finally in February of the next year announced his intention to share profits. The police would allow no meeting of his employees, for there was a rule forbidding workmen to assemble in numbers larger than twenty. A law against engaging a worker for more than a year was also invoked against him, and his men were suspicious. In 1834 he carried out a theatrical stroke by throwing a bag containing 11,386 francs on the table to be divided among the forty-four employees whose length and quality of service entitled them to share in this amount. Other

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[2]N. P. Gilman, *Profit Sharing Between Employer and Employee* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1889), p. 70.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 71.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 73.

benefits were gradually added. Although his plan provided for making the mutual aid society—the employees' organization—a partner in the company, which was finally done in 1863, Leclaire remained master of the firm. He threatened his copartners with various actions to lessen their power and profits when they did not go along with him and thanked them delightfully when they acceded, even after one of his threats. His last years were spent in completing plans for making the business self-perpetuating through the employees. At the death of a partner the employees elect one of their number to the vacancy; there is even a provision for supplying him with the necessary capital, if he does not have it, till he can earn it himself. The success of the entire plan is amply witnessed by the fact that the business is still a most successful concern operating under the name of Redouly et Cie.[5]

In 1846 the Coöperative Paper Works of Angoulême, in France, set up a welfare scheme in the form of a bread ticket which amounted, in times of price inflation, to a differential wage. By a system of prizes for production this grew into a sort of profit sharing scheme.[6] G. Steinheil Dilliter et Cie, cotton manufacturers of Alsace, started a participating plan in the same year, under which a collective bonus fund was built up and employer and employee shared both profits and losses.[7] The first example of profit sharing in England was started in 1865 by Henry Briggs, Son and Company, operators of collieries in Yorkshire, following a long, bitter strike and series of conflicts. This firm set up a scheme to share all profits (after deduction of a dividend of 10 per cent on the capital) half and half with the workers and arranged for the representation of employees on the Board of Directors through sale of stock to employees. Henry Briggs and his sons were at first called many hard names, but after a while the plan worked well and harmoniously. It was abandoned in 1875 because of various differences: the employees accused the employers of putting too much money into reserve and depreciation funds and of buying a new mine with a part of the

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[5]N. P. Gilman, *Profit Sharing Between Employer and Employee* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1889), 75–105.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 107.

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 164.

profits before the division was made; but the real test and failure came when the company compelled its workers to choose between joining the labor union and continuing the plan.[8]

Many other firms in England and France tried profit sharing with varying success. The first textile mill to take it up in England made its experiment between 1873 and 1877 but found the scheme had no effect on production or personnel because, as they explained, predominance of the piece-work system did not leave so large a margin of effort to be exploited. Probably, however, the main reason for failure was the smallness of each operative's share.[9]

OTHER EARLY WELFARE WORK

Only one more outstanding example of the early welfare schemes needs mention here, and that chiefly because a comparison of its position with respect to schemes in the textile industry offers such an excellent illustration of our definition of welfare work: "Anything for the comfort and improvement, intellectual and social, of the employees over and above the wages paid, which is not a necessity of the industry or required by law," [10] in which we substituted the term "custom" to apply to the earlier decades of the factory system before there were any laws. This example is the welfare work of the Krupp steel works in Germany, of which housing was, and still is, by far the most important part. As we have seen, housing schemes have been more or less taken for granted in the textile industry during most of its history, certainly for a period at its beginning in each newly developed center of the industry. So nearly universal has this been that housing *per se* was not considered welfare work; it was only when a mill provided houses better than usual that this fact was mentioned at all, or was considered a welfare activity. Not so in other industries; and therefore any review of the early schemes should include this one.

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[8]Ministry of Labour, Intelligence and Statistics Department. *Report on Profit Sharing and Labour Co-partnership in the United Kingdom, 1920* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1920), pp. 106 ff.

[9]*Ibid., passim.*

[10]See chap. XVI, p. 352.

The Krupp Company was started in 1811, but its first welfare work, a sickness and death benefit, did not begin until 1835, followed by housing in 1861. The latter was made desirable by overcrowding and the unsanitary conditions of houses then available for employees. Their first houses, while much better than those the people had been living in, were far from later ideas of model housing. They were ungainly barracks sheathed in corrugated iron, with no trees around them. Each subsequent colony was an improvement in appearance and convenience. Each group was a complete community with shaded streets and, except for the first one or two, well laid-out parks, churches, post office, school, stores, library, and assembly hall. Coöperative stores, started in 1868, have grown until they now include a number of different concerns for the supplying of all household and personal needs. Elementary education sponsored by the company was begun in 1877, classes in household arts, in 1875. Later additions include club houses, hospital, baths, dining halls, and many other establishments.[11]

Here, as at New Lanark and Lowell and most of the other localities mentioned, was a paternalistic concern with more or less intimate personal affairs. This concern was based partly, though perhaps unconsciously, on one of three ideas: that the worker does not know what is best for him; that he is not fully capable of getting these advantages for himself; that such provisions will attract and hold better workers and make them more efficient—that it pays. Sometimes, no doubt, there is, as at present, a blending of all these motives.

Even a cursory examination of the periodical literature of the eighteen-seventies and eighties reveals an occasional description of welfare experiments. References to a few of these will suffice to show their lines of development. In 1885 Richard T. Ely described in some detail the town of Pullman, Illinois (then four years old), its housing, its welfare work—and its company dominance.[12] In 1887 Washington Gladden described the "Seaside Institute" of Warner Brothers, corset manu-

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[11]Budget Meakin, *Model Factories and Villages* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1905), pp. 364 ff.

[12]"Pullman: a Social Study," *Harper's Magazine,* LXX (1885), 452.

facturers, which greatly resembled the most modern of the residence halls for girls at Southern textile plants. The building, a home for girl employees, cost $40,000 and contained a refectory supplying board at low cost, sewing rooms, evening classes, a stage and auditorium for giving plays, pianos, baths, and recreation rooms for sociables. More important was the fact that the company was setting aside a fund to form an endowment, to ensure the work's being carried on in case of a change in ownership. Dr. Gladden gave this as an example of the fact that the utopias about which people had been writing really could come true. He praised it highly and, more interesting for our present purposes, he assured his readers that the number of such employers was growing.[13]

An English example of the same period is even more like many present-day welfare programs. The writer did not reveal the name of the factory or even the type of industry. He did tell us that it made a product holding a monopoly of its field. This, of course, would eliminate textiles and many other established industries and may account for the financial ability to carry on such "frills." There was a club room fitted up with magazines and newspapers, a kitchen where employees could bring food to be cooked (the early forerunner of the cafeteria), a dining room, a room for daily religious services held by a chaplain attached to the factory, an outdoor gymnasium, a garden with flowers and lawn in which on Saturdays the factory band played for dancing on the green. There was a pension system for the aged, infirm, and "persons overtaken by accidents." Great care was taken to employ only persons of good character, and the owner and his wife, who lived near by, were personally acquainted with and interested in the workers. The Earl of Meath, who wrote the article,[14] explained that he did so in the hope that this example would inspire other industrial magnates to do likewise.

In 1886, the N. O. Nelson Manufacturing Company of St. Louis, Missouri, and Mound City and Leclaire, Illinois, started

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[13]"Labor and Capital, A Connecticut Example," *Century Magazine,* XXXIV (1887), 472.

[14]"A Model Factory," *Nineteenth Century,* XXIII (1888), 536.

its profit sharing plan and carried on a rather elaborate welfare scheme as well. In 1895 the latter included a village, a clubhouse for boarding employees, a coöperative store, a billiard room, athletics, a greenhouse supplying plants free to employees, a band, a library, and a kindergarten.[15] Procter and Gamble Company, Ivorydale, Ohio, started a profit sharing scheme a year later which included a pension fund and several welfare activities of a similar sort.[16]

The textile plants of New England seem to have abandoned most of the welfare work which they were engaged in when Chandler Holbrook made his tour in 1827-28.[17] Several long articles in the *Atlantic Monthly* from 1879 to 1888 describe the operatives, their hours of work, their well-being or their poor condition, their social isolation or their contentment, but make no mention of welfare activities.[18] Indeed one writer charges specifically that "the employers have not manifested, nor do they now, any visible practical interest in their welfare . . . There are no libraries, no reading rooms and very few social advantages . . . There is abundant room for philanthropy and social reformers. The owners of the factories owe duties to the ignorant people they employ, but in the past they have not performed them except in a very few cases."[19] (He neither describes nor mentions these.) A few scattered articles on Southern mills show the status to be more nearly what it was in the eighteen-forties and fifties. For example, Pacelot, South Carolina, had a school run by the mill, a company doctor, a store, and charged no house rent. A mill at Columbia specialized on improved working conditions inside the mill—ventilation and devices for carrying off dust—and on its churches and park in the village.[20]

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[15]F. W. Blackmar, "Two Examples of Successful Profit-Sharing," *Forum,* XIX (1895), 57 ff.

[16]*Ibid.*

[17]See chap. XVI, p. 368.

[18]*Atlantic Monthly,* XLIII (1879), 689 ff; XLVI, 460 ff; LXII, 16 ff, 315 ff, 605 ff.

[19]Anon., *Atlantic Monthly,* XLVI (1880), 464.

[20]E. Porritt, "The Cotton Mills in the South," *New England Magazine,* XII, N. S. (1895), 575.

RECENT INCREASE IN WELFARE WORK

For the historical student who would gather the story of general industrial welfare work from books and periodical literature there is with the beginning of the twentieth century, an ever-increasing wealth of material. It reached its flood tide about the time of and just after the World War. There are many reasons for this. In the first place this period saw the rise of a number of magazines specializing in factory management, by which was largely meant personnel matters and industrial relations. These periodicals encouraged the description and discussion of every possible scheme. The public seemed increasingly interested in everything relating to industry. This new interest was no doubt stimulated, in the United States at least, by the muckraking of the first part of the century, when wholesale attacks were being made on industry and big business in general. Many writers and magazines jumped to their defense, with the result that the system's advantages and the good side of large industries were given quite as enthusiastic and frequent publicity as the evils. The third and chief reason for the flood of literature lay, of course, in the greater amount of welfare work available for description. These welfare activities were the natural results of the increased size of companies and individual plants and represent an effort to restore the "personal touch" that had formerly existed under simpler manufacturing systems.

The floods of magazine material were not all. Every few years the experiences of great numbers of plants were gathered together by some enterprising visitor or foreign traveler. Naturally such private or semi-private surveys are selective rather than exhaustive. And so, while the extent and variety of welfare work described show an amazing growth, and though the writers probably attempted to include all strikingly different kinds, their writings are in reality only indicative of a large number of instances. The spread of welfare work in industry of all kinds may be readily indicated in general by brief reference to a few of these books.

In 1905 Budgett Meakin, an English free-lance visitor, writer, and lecturer on industrial betterment, published a

book, cited above,[21] describing the welfare and social-work adventures and experiments of some 230 companies all over the United States and Europe. Social secretaries, a suggestion of the American Institute of Social Service (then the League for Social Service), had in 1889, become so popular and so numerous that four years later, Meakin tells us, it was possible for them to hold a conference. Their activities included employment, the placing of workers, complaints, recreation, the operating of company settlement houses or kindergartens, acting as "workers' friends," conducting classes, acting as "hostesses" in an attempt to initiate social contacts in the plant—any one or several of such activities, depending on the needs of the situation, the interests of the executive, or the talents of the secretary. Welfare schemes included every sort of activity; social relations ranged from giving testimonials of character to making rules requiring the men to have their hats off in a department in which girls were employed. The plans included, as well, attention to the beauty and safety of surroundings, to working conditions, rest rooms and recreation, dining rooms and club rooms, to vocational and cultural classes, and to libraries and housing.[22]

Various associations promoting welfare work in industry grew up, such as the National Civic Federation, with a welfare department, and the American Institute for Social Service, already mentioned, which had as secretary, and later as director, W. H. Tolman, a man much interested in the industrial side of welfare. As secretary, Tolman had an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with most of the welfare programs of the country. His book [23] published in 1909 treats of over two hundred plants in the United States alone that were carrying on welfare work. Under the heads of the social secretary, hygiene, safety, mutuality, thrift, profit sharing, housing, education, recreation, and communal and social betterment, he describes a thousand and one different activities in widely separated parts of the country and in every sort of industry.[24]

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[21]*Model Factories and Villages.*

[22]*Ibid., passim.*

[23]*Social Engineering* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1909).

[24]*Ibid., passim.*

In 1916-17 the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics gathered the material for a bulletin on welfare work by employers in the United States. Though making no effort to cover all plants doing welfare work the Bureau found it necessary to include 431 plants in 38 states in order properly to represent industries, areas, and types of social and welfare work being done, and this was before the peak of war activities.[25] In July, 1926, Abraham Epstein of the Pennsylvania Old Age Commission wrote that he had had occasion to examine the welfare practices of 1,500 of the larger concerns in the United States and found that over 80 per cent, employing 4,000,000 workers, were doing welfare and social work and that half that number had elaborate schemes.[26] This work has become so common that everybody who knows anything about industry at all knows of these activities. The public and the workers now take at least some of the most common and fundamental of them quite as a matter of course.

PRESENT REASONS FOR WELFARE WORK

The early reasons for welfare work were, in the order of their importance, paternalism, philanthropy, and a feeling that the work paid in increased loyalty and service. All these are still present, but the emphasis has changed. Paternalism is so completely out of fashion that even when it is probably an important reason it is called by some other name. Philanthropy is still important in individual companies and in specific phases of a welfare program, but it is hardly to be held responsible for the comprehensive welfare schemes common today. With the rise of modern "efficiency methods" the economic basis of welfare activities gains heightened importance. One needs add only the desire to regain some form of the old personal touch to complete a set of reasons as complex as the industrial order itself. Mr. Epstein analyzes them in the following stimulating manner:

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[25] *Welfare Work for Employees.*

[26] "Industrial Welfare Movement Sapping American Trade Unions," *Current History,* XXIV (July, 1926), 516. Reprinted by special permission of the *Current History Magazine,* a monthly periodical published by the New York Times Company.

Underneath [modern welfare activities] often aspire to help the workers out of their own class by the gradual identification of their interests with those of the management. While working for the increase of production and profits, modern welfare practices hope to obtain this result, not through discrimination or the lowering of standards, but by recognizing that capital can prosper only as long as it secures the good-will of its workers by providing better advantages for them.

What reasons underlie the amazing growth of this new relationship? Briefly, they are these:

(1) The wide diffusion of corporate ownership and the replacement of the old line "captain of industry" by the salaried heads and managers. These new men who are more and more recruited from the business schools of our large universities enter industry with a more open mind and are imbued from their college days with a certain social mindedness toward the workers under them such as was altogether foreign to the generation of men who have "risen from the ranks." The doctrine that a contented employee is the best asset to a prosperous business is accepted by them as a cardinal principle of successful management;

(2) The replacement of the marginal employer by well established concerns who can afford to give adequate consideration to the improvement of both their labor maintenance as well as the quality of their products;

(3) The desire to anticipate or avoid governmental regulation and legislation. Indeed the most extensive development of the major features of present day "welfare work" parallels the period of agitation for protective labor laws;

(4) The effect of the war and the cutting off of immigration, which reduced the supply of labor, necessitating greater consideration of the existing labor force;

(5) The growth and power achieved by the labor unions in the United States during the war, and abroad since the war;

(6) The advent of the "public relations" or social-engineer whose influence on labor relations is steadily growing in modern industry;

(7) The growth of insurance companies which, with their increasing power and influence, have sought for new fields to conquer. The main inspiration for the amazing spread of at least two or three major phases of present day "welfare work" can probably be credited to their prodigious zeal;

(8) Last, but not least, there is unquestionably, a new and different spirit abroad since the days of the industrial pioneer. A new generation is now in control and many an industrial leader has

really come to be convinced that as his "brother's keeper" he must safeguard the welfare of the men under him.[27]

Many of the points Mr. Epstein mentions contain relics of the old foundations of welfare work transformed by the new conditions. Some of them touch the textile industry, especially the industry of the South, only slightly; others are vitally important. Some center around the old paternalism and philanthropy, but most of them are based on the belief that the work pays. Robert Owen believed that it did, and more and more industrial executives are gradually becoming converted to the idea. Of all the men interviewed for this study only a few had abandoned welfare work because they thought it did not pay or would not pay under proper conditions. They think that it attracts better workers and holds them when once they are in the company; that it makes them happier and therefore more productive; more intelligent and therefore more efficient; more loyal and therefore more responsible. Few manufacturers can tell how much it pays, for it deals with imponderables to which it is difficult to apply the methods of cost accounting. Some students and critics of industrial welfare complain of this new emphasis on its economic value, but most of them, believing that it offers a more self-respecting basis for both employer and employee, prefer that the employer frankly admit he is doing it for the company's profit.

CHANGE IN METHOD

The nature and method of the work has changed no less. Robert Owen and his contemporaries might personally influence an individual employee to believe in the value of a new sanitary regulation, but it is a far cry from such direct efforts to the elaborate departments of the Ford Motor Company and the National Cash Register Company, with their experts on health, family case work, legal advice, vocational education, relief, employee relations, and wage schedules. Between these are the several stages through which the wel-

[27] *Op. cit.*, p. 517.

fare work of most plants has gone or is going. Boettiger distinguishes three:

> The evolution of employers' welfare work reveals a negative tendency away from the paternal type of policy and a positive tendency toward the progressive differentiation and functionalization of welfare activities . . . This two-sided process of differentiation and integration of welfare activities has been continuous and progressive and may well be divided into three distinct stages. In the first stage welfare arrangements are more or less indefinite and spasmodic efforts of the employer, generally avowedly paternal and frequently inquisitorial in character. In the second stage that work is delegated to trained specialists variously called social secretaries, welfare secretaries, welfare agents, etc., who exercise very little if any authority and are directly responsible to the employers. In the third stage they are systematically coördinated as major staff functions under the direction of specialists who enjoy considerable authority and are variously called employment managers, welfare directors, labor managers, personnel administrators, labor supervisors and the like.[28]

This writer then proceeds to describe in more detail the character and spirit of these stages. In the first stage

> There is little or no pretension of democratic arrangements; the employer himself supervises his philanthropies, or a general manager responsible for production also has charge of the welfare work. Although the economic advantages are understood and recognized, the work is not functionalized from an economic standpoint; the advantages of employment and "the good of the workers" receive an exaggerated emphasis; the work is more or less crude, uncertain, generally badly managed, and its relation to the business is not well understood. . . . The second stage . . . becomes necessary as the work develops in magnitude and definiteness. . . . The welfare secretary is directly responsible to his employer. He has "influence rather than authority"; in general his chief function is to establish or maintain a personal relation between management and workers. Differences in local requirements and the size and character of the factory lead to considerable variety in the work done. . . . The experience, personality and theories of the welfare secretaries also modify it.[29]

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[28] *Op. cit.*, pp. 122 f.

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 123 ff.

These very modifications lead to development along special lines which later grow into the more elaborate schemes. Boettiger points out that probably half the welfare work in the country is still in the first stage, and a third in the second, leaving a small share to make up the functional type,[30] but since these are large concerns with thousands of employees they cover far more than their proportion of the workers of the country.

In the textile industry, at least, each of these three stages might well be divided into two parts. In the first stage it is usually the president of the company or the highest acting executive who starts some philanthropic, educational, social, or recreational features. Presently, if these things prosper and develop, particularly if they expand to include more than the special hobby of the initiator, the consequent demands upon his time make it necessary for him to turn them over, usually very gradually, to some lower official, the superintendent, the paymaster, the bookkeeper, or a staff worker. In time these duties come to be considered part of that person's job, instead of being avocational activities. In medium-sized mills in North Carolina, for example, there is frequently a certain person who has a heterogeneous collection of duties, some connected with the production or office side of the business and some with the personnel or welfare and village side. The second stage can likewise be divided, in the textile industry in North Carolina, into two steps. Many mills have employed, as their first full-time worker, not a person trained in any one field of welfare, but a "born worker"—a local minister, a Y.M.C.A. or Y.W.C.A. worker, a school teacher, or some citizen of the community, often a woman, whose interest in and desire for some sort of social service has led him or her into volunteer work of the same kind that is now put on a paid basis. These are "community workers" or "welfare workers" who carry on a wide variety of activities, though usually some one sort predominates. But with our modern itch for specialization, the plant that can afford it soon wants a specialist and so it sends the worker off for training or hires a person already trained, thus passing to the second step, where are found the

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

industrial nurse, the recreation and playground supervisor, the home economics teacher.

The final, functional stage is represented in the textile industry only in its beginnings and these only in the larger concerns. There are now many textile companies which employ several specialists of the type mentioned above, but there are few, if any, which have a functionalized department in Boettiger's sense, with an executive of rank and authority at its head. The great majority of the textile plants carry on their welfare work under one or another of the first subdivisions, supplying the personal work of the acting executive or of some staff officer, with an increasing number going over into the class employing an untrained worker in good times. As we have already seen, the mills having specially trained workers are relatively scarce, while those having a group of them are rare indeed.

REASONS FOR STATUS OF WELFARE WORK IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

At first glance, it seems rather strange that the pioneer modern industry, which was a pioneer likewise in welfare work, should still be in the early stages of this new and lusty development, while other industries, starting far later and beginning their welfare work later still, should have developed it so much more rapidly and so much further.

One of the chief reasons for this is the fact that the textile industry is made up of so many small units. Only about 6 per cent of the mills of North Carolina, for example, employ more than 500 workers.[31] One may reply, of course, that North Carolina mills are smaller than the average, but over the entire country the number of concerns with 3,000, 4,000, or 5,000 workers in a single unit or a single town is very small indeed. Common sense will tell the most casual observer that a company cannot afford half a dozen experts to do welfare work alone when there are not as many specialists in the entire company. On the other hand, the company ranging

[31] *Report of Department of Labor and Printing of North Carolina,* 1925–26 (count made of Textile Tables).

from 500 to 1,500 employees is the natural field for one, two, or three workers, each trained in different lines, such as health, vocational education, or recreation. The writer is acquainted with but few plants of less than 350 workers which have considered themselves able to employ full-time welfare workers, unless they have done it during hopeful good times and retrenched when the tide turned. But in North Carolina 70 per cent of the textile plants have fewer than 200 operatives.[32] This leaves them in the field of industries whose welfare work is carried on by the head of the concern. He can do it successfully because the smallness of the plant enables him to know most of the employees personally and a great deal about their families and their problems. Size, then, largely determines the type of welfare work in a given mill.

Another reason is the fact that the industry is permeated with tradition. As industries go, it is quite old, the oldest in any modern sense of the word. In its life of a century and a half there have developed many traditions as to ways of doing work, of organizing the force, of transmitting authority down the line, of promotion, of housing workers, of village supervision, and naturally enough of welfare work. Hence we find the mills today doing about the same sort of things that Robert Owen did. That does not mean, of course, an apostolic succession of unbroken tradition—no doubt there are as many mill men who never heard of Owen as there are among other citizens, while even fewer know anything about his coöperative store or his playgrounds for children. But there can be little doubt that the earlier experiments influenced later ones, these in turn still others. There are suggestions of this influence all along the industry's history, and even among the newest mills in North Carolina the executives say frankly that they copied many things from the plants in which they served their apprenticeships, though adopting such improvements as they had evolved themselves.

And yet it is highly probable that even without this strong current of tradition the mills would have developed very similar systems of welfare. For, after all, they have always dealt with the same sorts of workers and conditions. They have always

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[32] *Ibid.* (count of Tables).

brought rural people into villages and therefore can greatly accommodate and please them by providing space for gardens and cows and chickens. They have always offered many unskilled or semi-skilled occupations, and so have drawn employees of such low economic status that the latter could not readily provide themselves with homes, even if they had been willing so to invest their savings in a one-industry village. The mills have always recruited from the vast unskilled groups, of which there is seldom a shortage, and hence except for brief periods, they have never experienced the severe or continued competition for workers which has so greatly influenced industries in making expensive efforts to hold a worker once he has been trained. The mills have often started in rural areas, employing a rather illiterate class which had little vision in matters of educational outlook, so that the village needs have been better served by setting up elementary schools than by any sort of skilled social work. The mills have, in the early stages, usually been isolated in order to take advantage of water power, to escape town taxes, or to reassure the other residents of a town that physical as well as social distance would be maintained, and therefore they have accordingly seen the need for some sort of recreation or at least clubs or fraternal orders to inspirit a group of country people unused to play. They have always created more or less artificial communities lacking the various types of leadership that would be present in more casual, normal communities, so that they have always found the need of supplying leadership to the village. And, of course, most of the mill promoters were natural leaders of at least some degree of ability, for otherwise they would not have become heads of the mills. In some regions where the industry is older and has become urban, as in England and New England, these conditions relating to rural background, education, isolation, and housing no longer exist. In the South generally they are still present, and in North Carolina especially so because of the continued regime of the small mill.

EXTENT OF WELFARE WORK

The results of welfare work in industry are difficult to analyze completely, to say nothing of evaluating them. Their

effects in the field of wages, efficiency, labor law, industrial relations, and unionism are no doubt widespread over the country, and certainly they are powerful in the Southern textile industry. In the matter of wages, welfare work was long accused of being a device of the employer for persuading workers to be satisfied with lower pay. While this may have been true in the earlier stages, it is probably not true in many cases at present. The concerns which do more welfare work usually are the bigger, more prosperous companies which pay at least the current wage of the community, if not a higher rate in order to secure a higher type of worker. In a few apparent exceptions the lower pay is usually found upon examination to be due not to the welfare work but to social and other advantages that make it possible to secure the desired type of workers for less than the current wage.

Many claims are made for the value of welfare work in increasing the efficiency of the employees. Insurance plans are sold as valuable means of reducing labor turnover; housing developments as doing the same as well as conferring all sorts of blessings that flow from contented and homekeeping employees; lunch rooms and cafeterias as improving health and dispositions; and so on. Most of these are rather intangible and difficult to measure. Besides, general business conditions and opportunities for employment have so much effect on all these matters, that it is hardly fair in any given situation to attribute all the improvements to welfare work. A new phase of the business cycle or a change in some apparently unrelated feature of company policy may cause disconcerting changes in the conditions that have been attributed to welfare work.

Perhaps one of the greatest fields in which the influence of welfare work has acted is that of labor law. As has already been pointed out, much welfare work is installed to prevent legislation—to make much of it unnecessary in order that the industry may be free from the added annoyances a law might impose and from federal or state inspection. But welfare work has also anticipated the provisions of labor laws and often made them possible. When one company after another has adopted better hours and working conditions, which were for them items in welfare programs, these reforms have served as valuable examples in educating the public to de-

mand at least some measure of similar reform from all employers.

In the field of industrial relations it is again very difficult to measure effects. Certainly most firms having elaborate schemes that includes machinery for adjusting differences can point to definite results; and all that have, by their welfare work, created a feeling of friendliness and frankness in their workers can claim much for it. It is, of course, just as reasonable to attribute the good relations as much to a wise and liberal labor policy as to welfare work. But whatever the fact in individual plants, the total effect is fairly impressive. Mr. Epstein in the article quoted above, points out that "a recent delegation of British workmen studying industrial conditions in the United States remarked that what surprised them most in this country was the harmonious relations between management and employees." From a wide acquaintance with welfare work and an earnest study of the problems which it creates and solves, Mr. Epstein believes that much of this harmony is attributable to welfare work.

Indeed, this writer considers that welfare work carried on by employers is having an even more important result—sapping the strength of the trade unions. In this article and a more recent one in *The New Republic* [33] he cites instances, figures, and opinions to prove his thesis. He points out that by providing many of the things for which unions have formerly had to fight, the employers have taken over much of the program of the unions including the very parts which enlisted and held the mass of workers; by their substitutes for social legislation in the way of insurance, pensions, and other devices they have further weakened the appeal of the unions to their members; by their representation schemes, which are usually connected with welfare work, they have taken away the very *raison d'être* of the unions; by their clubs and recreation facilities they are even replacing the social and fraternal by-products of the unions.

So much, then, for the general history and philosophy of employers' welfare work. If it is having the far-reaching results

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[33] "Outwitting American Unionism," *The New Republic,* April 6, 1927, p. 190.

attributed to it, the progress of the movements is a question of importance far beyond the limits of the plant or even of the community centering around it. And in the South it is perhaps more important than in any other region as a vital element in the lives of the people.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONCLUSION: MILL WELFARE WORK AND PUBLIC OPINION

We have seen that outside activities form a channel through which the mills of North Carolina are influencing the life of the state quite as much as through such purely economic phases as wages and dividends. Conversely, the reaction of the outside world to the mill economy is concerned most strongly with these same outside activities. This reaction takes the form of a few intangible but nevertheless powerful forces which have served, through a period of years, to modify mill welfare work. There has always been the force of public opinion; more recently there has been added the force of a rather significant new philosophy of welfare. These should, and perhaps will, increasingly affect the attitude of the social scientist toward the mill economy when he has obtained enough information upon which to base a scientific opinion.

EFFECT OF PUBLIC OPINION

The more or less detailed accounts of opinions regarding the mills and their policies, given in Chapters XIII–XV, make clear, it is hoped, one important fact. In the main, the attitude of the surrounding public is one of approval of the local *status quo*. Are the mills isolated? Most of the citizens of a town prefer that they should be set apart in location and see to it that they are likewise set apart in educational, church, and social life. We must bear in mind that if the mill workers have an inferiority complex it is usually met by a superiority complex on the part of the town or country people with whom they come in contact. Are the mill schools inferior? Some of them are, no doubt. And they will continue to be so in reality, if not nominally, even though they are so rapidly being incorporated in town and consolidated systems, as long as a teacher not quite up to the standard of excellence for the "best" school

in town is considered satisfactory for a school that serves the mill people.

Both the community and the state realize the power and influence of the industry. It consists of some 540 establishments in 63 per cent of the counties, with directors, officials, and stockholders making up the vast body of the more influential citizens in their communities. The mills have meant growth to many towns and prosperity to whole sections of the state; the mill executives are widely scattered and are generally known as Christian gentlemen, influential in the churches, and social and business leaders among groups of various sorts. For these reasons, political, moral, social, and economic, the cotton mills may almost be said to have a vested interest in the state.

Because it is so interwoven with the life of all classes the industry is highly sensitive to public opinion. Many of the fundamental changes recorded in this study have been responses to opinion. People in the South unused to rows and rows of homes all alike were depressed by this aspect of the mill village. It was the most obvious thing about the village. They often said "Yes, they are neat little cottages—if only they were just not all alike"; or, "They are dingy little cottages and they look all the worse because every one is alike." And the mill owners have gone to considerable pains and some expense to remove this objection. People said that the mills wanted to escape town taxes and yet secure all the advantages of living in town; and public opinion has resulted in the extension of town limits to include adjoining mills, and the incorporation of many mill towns. People said that the mills wanted to run the schools, whereas they ought to be in the more regularly constituted systems. The figures given in Chapter III show that the mill schools are keeping step in the whole movement toward consolidation and the creation of special tax districts. This study has had for its object the presentation of facts and attitudes as they exist. It presents no program of reform. But it does seem to show that if further fundamental changes are to take place in the social economy of the mills they must come through the pressure, or at least the approval, of the public around the mills. Education of the people of the state and in the immediate vicinity of

the mills in mill problems and needs is a more fruitful means of reform than denouncing the "mill barons" and pitying "the poor mill people." Individual writers and speakers have done this for a century and a half, if we consider the entire mill history, and always with little result unless they have guided public opinion against the things they denounce. There have been more changes in the appearance, living conditions, and community life of mill villages of North Carolina in the last ten or twelve years than in the forty years before. Some of this has been due to the fact that during at least the early part of this period the mills were more prosperous and could afford the changes. Much has also been due to the work of leaders in the industry who have gone ahead of public opinion and have set the pace for it and for their associates. But the most far-reaching changes have come in response to some sort of public demand or bid for public approval. The state and the South are fortunate in having an ever increasing number of citizens and editors who are interested in the social and economic revolution that is going on about us.

TRENDS TOWARD PUBLIC RELATIONS

The mills' trend toward wider contact with the world about them is partly the natural effect of external forces. The growth of towns and the development of school systems are two such forces. A third lies in the agencies that the public is now for the first time providing for humanitarian and social service. The mills and the mill people use them and benefit by them as much as any other group of citizens do. These outside forces are met and aided by some inside the mill village. The little mill is not able to support the activities that have been made fashionable by its bigger neighbor, and it is usually glad to accept the new public services. The mill families are becoming more alert and better educated. As a result, they are showing signs of preferring to have some things done by public agencies rather than by representatives of the employer. There is no reason to believe that all these forces and tendencies will not increase as times goes on.

PRESENT STATUS OF WELFARE PHILOSOPHY

In spite of all these indications and trends there is yet, for good or ill, a great deal of paternalism in the relation of employer and employee in North Carolina. A critic who was given wide hearing a few years ago found mill managers saying that the workers are like children and must be treated accordingly. An intelligent woman who thought she knew mill owners and mill workers—having grown up within earshot of half a dozen whistles—was struck by this fact when she read some of the chapters of this study. "It is amazing how much they *do for* the people—how much the people call on them to do."

The welfare activities, formal and informal, in North Carolina mills grow out of close personal relations and, in the main, of good feeling. First of all, the individual mill man is sure that his workers are above the average. There was scarcely a hosiery mill man interviewed who did not remind the interviewer that "our girls aren't like cotton mill folks. We get a superior type." He is as proud of it as his loopers are proud of their superiority to spinners. Every cotton mill man was sure that his people were superior to other cotton mill folk. "They are our kind of people—come from this county"; or, "They are fine mountain stock, not the riff-raff and failures from the farms about town"; or, "They have been here with us for years. We don't have the moving, roving kind"; or, "We attract the best class because we are a new mill, have good houses, and pay good wages." Literally hundreds of times were these and similar reasons given for a mill's superior workers. Only once in all the interviews did the writer hear a manager say that he "guessed the folks were about the average." This was at one of the most down-at-the-heel villages in the state, with the most thriftless, slovenly looking people scattered over its streets. As long as this feeling of pride in their workers exists the mill executives will not lose faith in the human material with which they have to work.

Probably one reason for their unanimity in this faith is their close knowledge of the operatives as human beings. This fact of close personal contacts has been referred to so often in speeches, in the newspapers, in the trade magazines, in this

study even, that it is by way of becoming tiresome. But it remains, nevertheless, one of the real bases of good relations in industry. It is what many industries are trying to put back into their plants by means of welfare schemes and experts. It is the theme of hundreds of books and articles on personnel relations. There is no use perversely refusing to recognize the power of these personal contacts in the North Carolina mills merely because they are natural and have always existed. In their way they are just as effective as if they were managed by specialists according to plans laid out by industrial relations engineers.

The mill man in North Carolina will tell you that he is in close touch with his employees. This may be partial and prejudiced testimony. But then he will relate, or in his account of other things will reveal, instances that show it clearly to be true. A man seeks advice about an operation for his wife—the wisdom of it, not solely the possibility of financial aid! Another asks how he shall manage a headstrong son or an erring daughter or how he shall invest his modest savings. The manager notices that "Mary and John have been going together," and he expects she will tell him soon when she is to be married. The preceding chapters have been full of examples of appeal to the manager in all sorts of group activities. The interviewer hears parts of such appeals in the interruptions which occur during the visits. Employees themselves, directly or indirectly, reveal similar conditions. With such an accumulation of evidence, the conclusion is inevitable that the manager is not merely paying lip service to a now popular idea. Sometimes this body of evidence reveals cases of injustice and control. And much more exists than is thus revealed. In a system of line organization in any industry the immediate supervisor of an employee has a great deal of power in matters relating to his job. The village system means that this power may extend to affairs of home and family. The extreme limits may even go to the extent of throwing a whole family out of employment and making it necessary for them to move if the head is fired. In a system of line organization in any industry it is common for the upper officials to back up the lower for the sake of discipline, authority, and a sense of responsibility. But the fact remains in the Southern mill that if a man feels

himself grossly mistreated he can and does appeal to higher authority. In a given mill under given circumstances he may not get justice; he may not find this personal touch and interest we have been describing. But in the next mill he may get both. As a result, his attitude of resentment or of loyalty is directed not toward the mill owners as a class but toward individual mill men. Thus as they affect both employer and employee the relations are kept on a personal basis rather than on a basis of class consciousness.

THE MILL SOCIAL ECONOMY AND THE SOCIAL ECONOMIST

Welfare work and other extra-mill activities may be said to constitute a part of the social economy of the cotton mill village. Their study in the light of certain concepts of social science leaves the student somewhat confused in his conclusions about their problems. For instance, there are the sociological concepts of competition and conflict between classes, and of accommodation to each other. We see that all over this country economic distinctions amount in many phases of life almost to caste, which creates social distance as evidenced in the location of residence sections or of group activities. Suppose we must choose between the idea of democracy on the one hand and self-expression and recognition on the other. Is it better, for example, that the mill people attend a big town church where in numbers, social and economic position, and education they are likely to be swamped, becoming rather docile followers of those with whom they associate? Or is it better that they have their own church where they can sing in the choir, play the organ, be Sunday school teachers, "personal workers" in the revivals, or even conspicuous sinners for whom the whole church is concerned? The opinion of a very sane and wise sociologist on this point is perhaps appropriate here. He reminds us that in such volunteer and personal affairs as church and community activities people must be congenial to get any pleasure out of them—nay, even to take any part in them at all. Such segregation as arises, unless it be artificially set up and fostered, may therefore be healthy in those fields. He does not consider, however, that such segregation is good in the case of schools. The child during the impressionable age

should have as varied stimuli as possible lest the feelings that make for segregation among the elders be perpetuated. In the latter case there is developed a cotton mill caste indeed, in which children will follow their parents for lack of contact with other life.

Shall we condemn unequivocally a paid leader for mill activities? A study of all phases of community organization shows a growing tendency to depend on paid leadership in relief, in recreation, in school and community interrelations. One Y.W.C.A. secretary thought that a company welfare worker might be successful if she did not make it her business to insist too much on the employer's point of view. But it is difficult to see the difference in a program managed by a company worker and one managed by a Y.W.C.A. worker who is financed by the employer and who considers him ideal as an employer and as a coöperator. And one imagines that if the secretary does not have somewhat this opinion of the particular manager in whose village she is working, she either does not try or is not allowed to work with his girls! If such a program is to be undertaken in full it can scarcely make much difference who undertakes it. For if community work in the village does not have as a part of its underlying idea training in self help and leadership, but rather depends constantly on the head of the mill or on the paid henchman of the head, it is a failure. It is a failure from the point of view of the mill because it will continue to increase its demands for money, effort, and attention instead of gradually coming to run itself. And from the point of view of a democratic society it has a dangerous tendency toward deadening and stultifying the public consciences of large numbers of the citizens who ought instead to be increasingly alert to think and act and lead. Again, shall we frown utterly upon benevolence and philanthropy? Well, in the settlement house, in the charity organization society, and in the history of all social work there seems to be evidence that the relation of patron and protégé is a very humanly satisfying relation to both sides. All the forces and relations that we have been discussing are commendable enough in themselves. Society approves of them in other situations. The trouble is that the cotton mill man is philanthropist, leader, and in a sense social worker, and is employer as well.

There lies the crux of the criticism. Willingly or unwillingly he lives in a one-man town, of which he is the arbiter in both economic life and social organization. He must not resent it if people impute to him the wrong kind of control. Willingly or unwillingly he finds himself in an artificial community where qualities of leadership are rare; it is obvious that he must personally or through representatives supply the deficiency. But he must not take it as a personal insult if people feel that he may lead where it profits him. The mill village has all these fundamental problems. Until they are attacked analytically and coolly, without prejudice or partiality, they cannot be solved.

And they cannot be solved completely in any case, for as with all human problems there is no absolutely right solution. Certainly there is none that will satisfy all parties, even the supposedly disinterested ones. But we shall get nowhere by taking one position and refusing to see anything but good in it and anything but bad in all others. There must be a spirit of compromise added to that of analysis. This is a heterodox position. Opinion and criticism and defense of the mills have been dominated by the doctrinaire too long to make it easy to adopt.

THE END

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